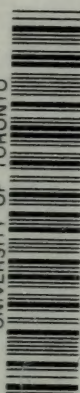



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COSSACKS DISPERSING A MASS MEETING OF CITIZENS.

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*Extra Volume—No. 1.*

*Edited by J. Ramsay MacDonald.*

# THE REVOLUTION

## IN THE BALTIC PROVINCES OF

# RUSSIA

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE ACTIVITY OF THE LETTISH  
SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC WORKERS' PARTY

BY  
AN ACTIVE MEMBER.

REVISED AND PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION AT THE AUTHOR'S  
REQUEST BY

ERNEST O. F. AMES.



LONDON:  
INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY,  
23, BRIDE LANE, E.C.

47913-1  
1908



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## EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE readers of this volume will require some assurance that its almost incredible chapters of persecution, torture and murder have been written by one who speaks from personal experience. That assurance can be given most unhesitatingly.

The author, who, for obvious reasons, must remain anonymous at present, was one of the founders of the Social Democratic Workers' Party in 1897. This Party fell under the ban of the Government, as is told in this book; the leaders were arrested, but the author managed to escape to England where he established a clandestine printing press to which he makes reference in his story. Since then he has visited Russia several times and has had hairbreadth escapes. Once he was discovered and arrested. He lay for eighteen months in jail and was then exiled to Siberia. On the frontier, however, he managed to

escape and found his way back to England. He was in the Baltic Provinces during both the "revolution" and the "punitive expedition" of General Orloff, in 1905, which he describes.

Accurate information at the present moment as to the state of affairs in the Baltic Provinces is welcome. Of assassinations on the one hand and the quelling of disturbances on the other, we have heard much in the press, and the discussions in the late Duma lifted up the curtain shielding the stage of the tragedies from the eye of Europe. But very few people are aware of the fearful lengths to which subjects and government have gone in Russia in their internecine struggles. To say that a state of civil war prevails is but a mild expression to describe a condition of things under which an oppressed, betrayed and exasperated people are being tortured and murdered to the number of many thousands in such a barbarous and bloodthirsty manner as to be almost without parallel in civilized history. A friend of mine

who has seen war raw and red, who has been through provinces crushed under Turkish rule, and who saw some of the Riga rising and some of the shooting in the sandhills near the town, tells me that nothing he has ever beheld haunts him so much as these Russian atrocities.

The country is so vast and the autocracy so relentless that in the unceasing record of repression and cruelty of the last few years, which becomes more brutal with every fresh outburst, one almost despairs of a change for the better or of the evolution of a standard of life and liberty worthy of the fearful sacrifices now being made. Nevertheless, it is the hope of the author of "The Revolution in the Baltic Provinces" that a wide publication of the facts will serve to hasten the dawn of better and more peaceful times for Russia.

No one can read this story of revolt without being at once overwhelmed with pain and thrilled with admiration. The heroism of our Russian comrades in face of torture and

death will be told in days to come by generations made rich by their sacrifices. History will pay an eternal homage to the victims of the bloody tyranny which now rules Russia.

This is a story of but a small corner of the Russian despotism, and it is not the corner where the fiends in the pay of the Czar have been allowed the most freedom. For, although in the Baltic Provinces political strife is perhaps more intense than elsewhere, unbridled massacre has not gone to such lengths as in districts where racial animosity has been used by the authorities as inflammable material. This ghastly tale is therefore too moderate a measure of the barbarism of the Russian bureaucracy. It is illustrated with reproductions of a few photographs taken under difficult circumstances, and therefore blurred and imperfect. When one remembers how they were taken, their very imperfections add to the sadness which broods over them.

One word more is required. Representa-

tives of these heroic men and women, finding no place on the continent of Europe where they could meet and discuss policy and take council together, came to London. Amongst them were men whom every human being who delights in freedom would be proud to honour—Leo Deutsch, Maxim Gorky, G. Plekhanof. All they desired to discuss was their relationship with the various parties in the Duma. They found a Liberal Government in power—a Government said to be contriving to come to a good understanding with the impotent creature whose feet are red with the blood of his people. They were watched by Scotland Yard detectives, they were dogged by these detectives, their names and addresses were ferreted out by these detectives, and, we are informed, handed over to the Russian police. When these delegates return and fall into the hands of their murderers, and when these brave souls, radiant with enthusiasm for the alluring cause of Liberty, drain to its bitterest dregs the cup of martyrdom, the Russian autocracy

with a leer may well thank God that Conferences may be held in England so long as Scotland Yard can thus become a department of the Russian police. To all this, official denials have been given, but unfortunately the facts are beyond dispute. All that the denials amount to is a proof that Scotland Yard on its political side is so badly controlled, or so corrupt, that its staff of spies may on its own initiative sell itself to foreign governments.

This book is published to enlist the sympathies of our people for the Russian Revolution which is no longer a thing that may happen but is an episode which has begun. The House of Romanoff, stricken from its beginning with madness, has turned the palaces of Russia into lunatic asylums and her prisons into the playgrounds of madmen. But at last the dawn of Liberty seems to have broken over the horizon. The Czar, whose existence is a taint in European civilization, is putting forth his final efforts to crush his people. Our Russian comrades

have replied, and this narrative brings to our ears a sad echo of the conflict. Great Britain has never had to blush for the assistance she gave to Italy striving to throw off the yoke of Austria ; she will never have to confess to shame for wishing the Russian Revolutionists God speed.

J. RAMSAY MACDONALD.

House of Commons,

*4th June, 1907.*



# THE REVOLUTION IN THE BAL TIC PROVINCES OF RUSSIA

## HISTORICAL.

THE struggle of the Lettish\* peasantry for emancipation, against the German nobility in the Baltic Provinces lasted over a century and ended with a partial victory of the peasants. On the 6th of September, 1863, a law was promulgated by which the peasants had the right of acquiring and holding as hereditary property those lands of the nobility on which they had worked. In 1870 this law was made general and applied to all other lands. Henceforth the small Lettish people divided itself into two opposite parties. One party, while boasting that they were continuing the emancipation struggle, were in

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\* The Lettish nation numbers 1 $\frac{3}{4}$  millions, and inhabits the whole of Courland, the greater part of Livonia and small parts of the Vitebsk and Kovno governments in the Baltic Provinces of the Russian Empire.

reality only defending the interests of the proprietor class. In these early days the real democratic movement could not find means to maintain even the talented writer I. Mater. Many peasants who formerly subscribed to his paper the "Baltic Peasant," had since their acquisition of land, ceased to be democrats and no longer supported the movement. Whereas the peasants who were without land were altogether too poor to afford money with which to pay for the paper.

The distribution of land in the eighties sets forth the following condition of things.

Courland has 2,427,635 dessiatins\* of agricultural land, of which 979,705 dessiatins belong to the nobility, 525,318 dessiatins to the Government and 898,249 dessiatins to the peasants. The peasants' land is distributed between 150,000 persons reckoning five to a family. The lands of the nobility are divided between 569 estates with 463 owners. If we reckon again five persons to each family then we see that this land of nearly one million

---

\* 1 Dessiatin—2 $\frac{3}{4}$  acres.

dessiatins belongs to only 2,300 persons. In 1881 the number of peasants in Courland was 563,000 (112,600 families), consequently at that time there were already 400,000 peasants without any land.

It was no better in Livonia. The statistics of Senator Manassein's survey in 1883, taken on account of the numerous complaints from peasants, show that of almost four million dessiatins of agricultural land 1,950,135 dessiatins belonged to the nobility, 1,245,814 dessiatins to tenant farmers, and 738,856 dessiatins to the government. It is true a part of the land of the nobles was let on lease to the peasants at a very high rent. According to the statement of the Governor-General, Count Palen, two-thirds of the whole land tilled by the peasantry belonged to the nobility. The peasants never received the land on long leases, and the rent was ever becoming higher and higher. The statistics showed that the nobles leased land to 25,622 peasant farmers. Of the government land there was in the hands of the peasants 267,982

dessiatins, which by the same reckoning means 9,382 peasants. Consequently there were in Livonia in the eighties only 175,000 peasants (reckoning five persons in each family) who had land. In 1870 the total population of Livonia was 852,115. Thus three-quarters of them were landless.

#### THE PROGRESSIVE PRESS.

A great number of the peasants, unable to find work on the land went to Riga, Libau and other towns. In Riga they established a Mutual Aid Society of Lettish Handicraftsmen. The organ of the society, the "Daily News," undertook an energetic struggle against the paper of the Lettish bourgeoisie, the "Baltic Messenger." At first the "Daily News" took its stand on a nationalist basis, but very soon it was compelled to recognize class divisions. The beginning of the Lettish Social Democratic Workers' movement dates from the years 1893-94. The great rush of housebuilding in all the towns at that time brought many workmen to the Baltic towns, even from Germany, and the interchange of views with these more

advanced workers germinated the ideas of class-consciousness in the Lettish workers. On the other hand the intellectual Lettish youth of Riga, Mitau and Dorpat, already acquainted with the Marxian theory, did not keep it to themselves, but propagated this new teaching through the "Daily News" and in the Mutual Aid Societies. They translated into Lettish and secretly circulated pamphlets by Kautsky, Bebel, Aveling and others. The "Daily News" printed long articles about the labour movement in Western Europe. At the same time it published powerful articles against the Lettish nationalistic movement. In a very sarcastic manner it demonstrated the class division between the newly risen Lettish bourgeoisie and the bulk of the Lettish people. This agitation found very good soil and the first organisers of the earliest secret circles of workmen were recruited from the readers of the "Daily News." During the years 1896-97 they succeeded in Riga and Libau in organising a 1st of May labour festival, although on a very small scale.

## EARLY REVERSES.

As elsewhere in Russia, so in the Baltic Provinces the fall of the first leaders of the organisation was due to treachery. In 1896 Subatoff, the general of the gendarmes in Moscow, succeeded in capturing a consignment of socialist books en route from Libau to Moscow. The man in charge of the publications confessed all he knew. Thanks to this betrayal and also to the discovery of the extensive correspondence between the young leaders of the movement, the Government obtained much material for proceedings and in 1897 one hundred and thirty-eight Lettish "political offenders" were imprisoned or driven into exile. The investigation was carried out with such cruelty that one of the accused, Dr. A. Krumberg, hanged himself in his cell.

Already at the time of this first crisis the intrigues of the Baltic nobility were strongly evident. The imprisoned staff of the "Daily News" were accused of having sought to establish an independent Lettish kingdom and the political police even searched for a

“pretender.” The Government had not yet distinguished between the bourgeois movement and the proletariat movement. When in the eighties the Lettish bourgeoisie sent a deputation to St. Petersburg to convey to the Czar their loyalty and entire submission, the governor of Livonia, Baron von Lilienfeld, wired to St. Petersburg to advise that the deputation should not be received, as one of the deputies, the attorney Kalnin, was the prospective candidate for the Lettish throne. At that time the Government was quite ready to believe in such tales, and declined to receive the deputation. Now, the revolutionary movement of the Letts is so definitely proletarian, that the present denunciation of the Socialists by the Baltic nobility is expressed in a less clumsy, more up-to-date way. The organ of the Nobility, the “Düna Zeitung,” announces that one of the executed socialists, Schneider, was the would-be president of the Livonian Republic.

#### THE WORK OF THE EXILES.

About twenty of the first Lettish offenders

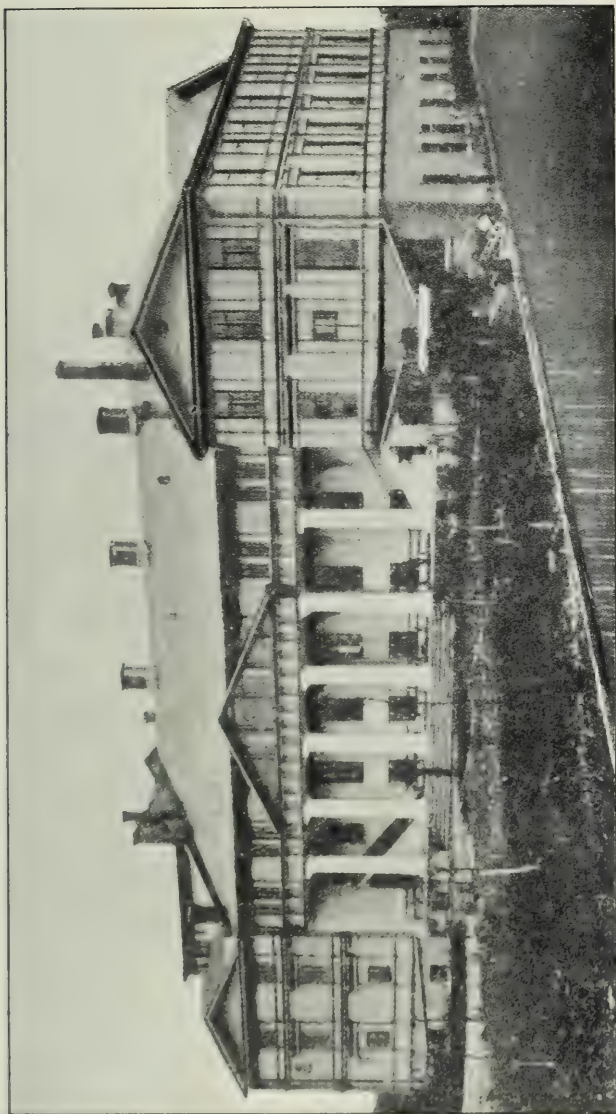
escaped abroad and in 1898 there appeared from Boston U.S.A. the first Lettish socialistic monthly periodical, the "Dawn," and in 1899, in London, the "Lettish Worker." Although the Labour organisations were destroyed and the best and most energetic leaders dispersed (probably for that very reason) there were in 1899 very serious Labour outbreaks in Riga and in Libau. They resulted in an apparent defeat of the workers, and great excesses were committed against them. The demonstration by the badly-paid and ill-treated women-workers of the Riga jute manufactories was the commencement of the protest. The working men of the large "Phoenix" factories joined them, and large masses of workers paraded the streets of Riga. The police failing to disperse the crowds, by squirting water over them with fire engines, the military were ordered out. For the first time the blood of the Lettish workers ran on the streets of Riga. The exasperated workers retaliated by demolishing some of the factories, in which work of destruction the roughs

especially took a great part. In Libau the outbreaks were very similar. About this time small groups of Socialists succeeded in distributing amongst the workers, the first Lettish socialist booklets and leaflets printed in London, and secretly imported into Russia by political refugees. In 1900 the Socialists again established new secret labour combinations. The long dispersed members of the original associations gathered round the new organisation. The Lettish leaders in the Baltic soon came into contact with the "Lettish Social-Democratic Union of Western Europe," organised by Lettish political refugees. But soon after there was a division in the "Union of Western Europe" and the endeavours of the Baltic comrades to unite the two groups were not successful. The paper, "The Lettish Worker," ended with its eighth number. One of the groups immediately founded a new periodical, the "Social Democrat," which popularised the principles of scientific socialism and very soon gained ground amongst workers in the Baltic Provinces.

The other group first tried to work with the Russian Social-Democratic Party, but later joined the Russian Social Revolutionary Party; some, however, went over to the Liberal Party, and others dispersed.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE "LETTISH SOCIAL  
DEMOCRATIC WORKERS' PARTY."

In 1901 the Lettish Social-Democratic circle in Riga was constituted; a year later circles were also formed in Windau, Libau, Talsen and the Courland group in Mitau. The first four circles were united in 1903 under the name of the "Baltic Lettish Social-Democratic Workers' Organisation," and in 1904 the Courland group also joined the above organisation. Thus the foundation of the "Lettish Social-Democratic Workers' Party" was completed in 1904. The first number of the Lettish-Social Democratic paper, "Struggle," appeared in March, 1904, being printed secretly in Russia. The first congress of the party took place in June, 1904, at which the provisional programme of the party was elaborated and the "Social-



THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE LETTISH WORKERS PARTY IN RIGA, DESTROYED BY

GENERAL ORLOFF'S TROOPS.

(Also see page 24).



Democrat" was openly recognised as the official organ. The annual statement for 1903-4 showed that during the year the party had distributed 336,000 printed leaflets, 6 editions of the "Social-Democrat," 4 editions of the "Struggle," and several booklets of the "Social Democratic Library."

At this time the party numbered 3,400 members; and it recognised as members only those who worked under the management of its local organisations, subscribed regularly to its periodicals, and kept their contributions paid. The yearly income of the party was then about £625.

The second Congress was held in June, 1905, in which five of its local committees, the Central Committees and the editors of the "Social-Democrat" participated. This second Congress accepted the following programme:—

1. Government by the people, *i.e.*, the Supreme Power of the State to be placed in the hands of a Legislative Assembly, consisting of Representatives elected by the whole population of Russia.

2. Adult suffrage, *i.e.*, the right to an equal,

secret, and direct vote in all elections, local and national, for all citizens, men and women, who have reached the age of 20, according to the proportional system of representation. Biennial elections; the right of every elector to fill a national office or to be placed on local boards of Self-government; payment of representatives; the responsibility of national representatives to their constituencies.

3. Whilst founding a Russian democratic republic, allowing home rule to all the separate nationalities in Russia.

4. All officials to be elected by direct popular vote, to be responsible to their constituents and to the courts of justice; every citizen to have the right to bring action against any official in the ordinary courts of law without applying to their immediate Superiors.

5. Unrestricted freedom of conscience, of the press, public speaking, meetings, strikes, association. Equal rights for all languages, *i.e.*, uncurtailed right to use any language in private and social life, in the schools, law-courts, government offices and in all local governing bodies. The inviolability of the person, and sanctity of home-life.

6. The abolition of the passport system and entire freedom as to change of abode and choice of employment.

7. The abolition of class distinction, abrogation of all prerogatives and the affording of equal opportunities to all the citizens without distinction of sex, nationality or faith.

8. Law Courts and defence free of charge. Elected judges and members of the jury to take a conspicuous part in the debates. The abolition of all special and extraordinary (military, clerical and administrative) courts, hard labour for life, corporal and other degrading punishment ; compensation to be given to those unjustly accused, arrested or sentenced.

9. Abolition of the standing army, and the establishment of a citizen defence reserve. War to be declared or peace proclaimed only by the national representatives ; international intervention or arbitration.

10. Disestablishment of the Church from the State and the whole educational system to be separated from the Church.

11. Compulsory free training at school up to 16th year ; free appliances, books and free meals for every pupil. Access to higher schools made possible for those who wish to progress in science and art.

12. Maintenance of the sick and aged to be derived from public funds ; doctors' services and medicine free of charge.

13. The abolition of all indirect taxes, and progressive income tax to be levied on all incomes (except the very lowest) and on inheritance.

In order to prevent the physical deterioration and moral degradation of the working class and to increase its power to strike the final blow, the party demands ;

1. That the working day should be limited to 8 hours for labourers of all classes, the total week's work not to exceed 46 hours.

2. That the law should fix a minimum weekly cessation of work, commencing at a given hour, on a certain day, and lasting for 42 hours for workers of both sexes in all branches of industry producing or distributing wealth. Besides observing the above-mentioned weekly rest, work should cease on general holidays, and those concerning the working classes in particular. (The first of May, or the anniversary of their comrades killed in the fight for freedom, etc.)

3. That no overtime is to be worked.

4. That night work is to be prohibited, *i.e.*, from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m., in all branches of work for the production of, or distribution of wealth, except for technical reasons, approved and endorsed by workers' organisations.

5. That no children be employed during their school years, *i.e.*, up to 16 years. Boys and girls from 16-18 years, should not work more than six hours per day.

6. That women should not be employed on work likely to impair their constitution. That women should be excused from work six weeks before, and six weeks after confinement, drawing their full pay for that period. Women workers should be allowed time off to feed their children at regular intervals.

7. That workers should be fully recompensed by their employers in cases of injuries incurred through

accidents causing partial or complete disablement.

8. Insurance of the workers at the expense of their employers against old age and sickness, and for free medical treatment.

9. That workers are not to be employed at a smaller wage than that legally fixed, or advised by workers' organisations. That wages should be paid in coin, and not by exchange of goods and corn, or by way of house-rent or rent for agricultural land. No part of wages to be kept back, unless so ordered by a law court. That wages are to be paid once a week, during work hours.

10. That the law should guard workers against being over-worked.

11. That strict rules for the protection of the lives and health of the workers should be adhered to in factories and workshops; working men's delegates should have full power to define and enforce such rules.

12. That the law should enforce strict observance of regulations concerning the workers' safety.

13. That courts of arbitration in which employers and employed participate alike should be established in all branches of national labour.

14. That superintendents of both sexes be elected by working men and paid by the State, to see that all laws and sanitary regulations are implicitly obeyed in all trades and occupations (not excepting the production of articles at home, agriculture and domestic service). That workers' delegates should be present at the distributing of piecework and at its

return, that prices should be fixed and conditions of work be arranged in their presence.

15. That employment offices should be opened and maintained at the expense of the State, and conducted by trade union officials.

16. Considering that the above immediate demands (aiming at the protection of the working class) could be conveniently put into practice in a bourgeois state managed democratically, the party maintains the economic struggle against existing conditions, but it is quite convinced that no reforms, meant to give protection to the workers and promised by autocratic government, could grant these demands, and that the only means of securing them is by the overthrow of autocracy and the convocation of a national assembly elected on an equal basis.

The Congress also passed several resolutions of a tactical character. Here we will mention only a few, about the general strike, the armed rising and demonstrations in churches. They are as follows :—

#### RESOLUTION CONCERNING ARMED UPRISING.

Considering (1) that the only genuine democratic element in Russia that could seize and establish a democratic management of affairs is the proletariat, and (2) that the Russian proletariat, especially in central

Russia, is not sufficiently class-conscious and well organised in order to start an open rebellion, and (3) that an armed uprising in isolated parts of the empire, with the proletariat of other parts not participating, could be suppressed by the autocracy in the most violent manner, this Congress of the Lettish Social Democratic Workers' Party does not deem it advisable to invite the proletariat to take such a hasty step. The Congress of the Lettish Social Democratic Workers' Party considers its chief aim is to stir up the workers' class consciousness, to organise and to direct the proletariat in its struggle, but whilst the repressive measures of the government do not permit the adoption of such a course, the Congress advises the workers ever to be prepared for an armed uprising parrying each violent act of the government with an armed fist, and turning skirmishes with the Czar's henchmen into never-ceasing guerilla warfare.

The resolution concerning the general strike is as follows :—"Considering that (1)

a strike has an economic tendency if it convinces the employer that the workers could hold out for a longer period, (2) that the general strike entails a fearful material loss to the working class—the Lettish Social Democratic Workers' Party does not advise the town workers to employ it as a weapon in their economic struggle or in political contingencies of lesser importance. But taking into consideration that the general strike is an effective coercive measure intended to attack our present social and political order of things and a means of mobilizing the revolutionary forces and lining them up in the streets, the Lettish Social Democratic Workers' Party Congress regards the general strike as a protest against the existing state of things and its brutalities—a protest which might assume the proportions of a popular rebellion, and therefore advises organisation of the general strike only at critical moments of the political struggle.

“Also taking into consideration that the abandonment of agricultural pursuits (during

the harvest, seed-time, etc.) spells enormous material loss to large landowners as well as tenant farmers and therefore all wanton cessation of work should be avoided, the Lettish Social Democratic Workers' Party Congress recognises in the general strike in the country districts a very effective weapon to be resorted to in the economic struggle."

The resolution concerning the church demonstrations is as follows :—" Taking into consideration, that adherence to a church in Russia is forced upon one, and that the church is able to influence the private life of individuals (in the family, for instance) and that the Lutheran church in the Baltic being closely connected with the landed gentry and autocracy by means of church patronage is a mischief-making weapon in the hands of the ruling class for suppressing people and keeping them in ignorance, also that the church demonstrations organised lately have helped to free people's minds from fetters and induced them to disregard the authority of the church and the parsons—the Congress advises the

organisation of church demonstrations at those places where propaganda work has been done before and small groups organised; at the same time unnecessary and superfluous acts of violence, for instance forcing parsons, spies, constables and other henchmen of the autocracy to bear red banners—should not be indulged in.”

In the meantime the membership of the party had risen to 9,000 and the yearly income to £2,083. During this year over a million leaflets were distributed, besides twelve numbers of the “Struggle” containing 5,000 to 10,000 copies in each issue, six editions of the “Social Democrat” of 5,000 copies each, five booklets of the Social Democratic Library of 5,000 copies each, and two booklets (3,000 copies each) of the Zurich branch. The party had organised during the year several big street demonstrations and a large number of meetings in the forests. In all the conflicts with the police the Party had shown satisfactory resistance. During the year 1905

the activity of the Party was at its height, and affected the social life of the people everywhere. But in order the better to judge of its activity it would be well to introduce some statistics showing the strength and inner organisation of the Party shortly before the memorable 30th of October.

At this time the Party had at its disposal 52 agitators or organisers and revolutionary agents, who gave their whole time to the work of the Party. These were distributed as follows, under the charge of:—

- (1) the Central Committee of 17 members.
- (2) the Riga                   "           "   14   "
- (3) the Libau               "           "   6   "
- (4) the Mitau               "           "   3   "
- (5) the Windau           "           "   3   "
- (6) the Tuckum-Talsen   "           "   2   "
- (7) the Livonian Committee, 7   "

At the Party's disposal were three secret printing establishments, which were able to turn out monthly 100,000 printed pages in quarto. The receipts for sales during the

last four months in 1905 for booklets alone was £6,250. The actual paying membership of the Party was :

In Riga and district,	about 7,200.
In Livonia	„ 2,500.
In Libau	„ 3,000.
In Windau	„ 2,000.
In Mitau and district	„ 2,500.
In Tuckum-Talsen	„ 500.
In other places and abroad	„ 500.

The total signed membership of the Party before the 30th of October thus consisted of about 18,200 members.

#### THE INNER ORGANISATION OF THE PARTY.

The inner constitution of the Party was as follows :

(a) In the towns every 10 to 20 members formed a "circle." The representatives of 10 to 20 circles maintained regular relations with a "district representative." All members with the district representative formed a separate district. Five to fifteen district representatives formed a secret flying station-commune, where they settled all the Party

affairs: the distribution of leaflets, the news-service, organisation of meetings, contribution, etc., etc. At each of these stations there was always engaged an agitator (or agent) of the central committee, but he was, however, under the obligation of giving an account of his work to the local committee of the district in which he was employed. The central committee had the right with the assent of the local committee to change the seat of the Party agitators. The local committee was formed from the Party agitators and district representatives by co-option. The local committee was obliged to give to the council of the district representatives a detailed account of all the money spent. Without the assent of the district representative council no meeting, strike, demonstration, distribution of leaflets or any other general action could be determined. In case of differences of opinion they appealed to the circle representative assembly or to a general members' meeting. In questions where secrecy was important, decision rested with the central

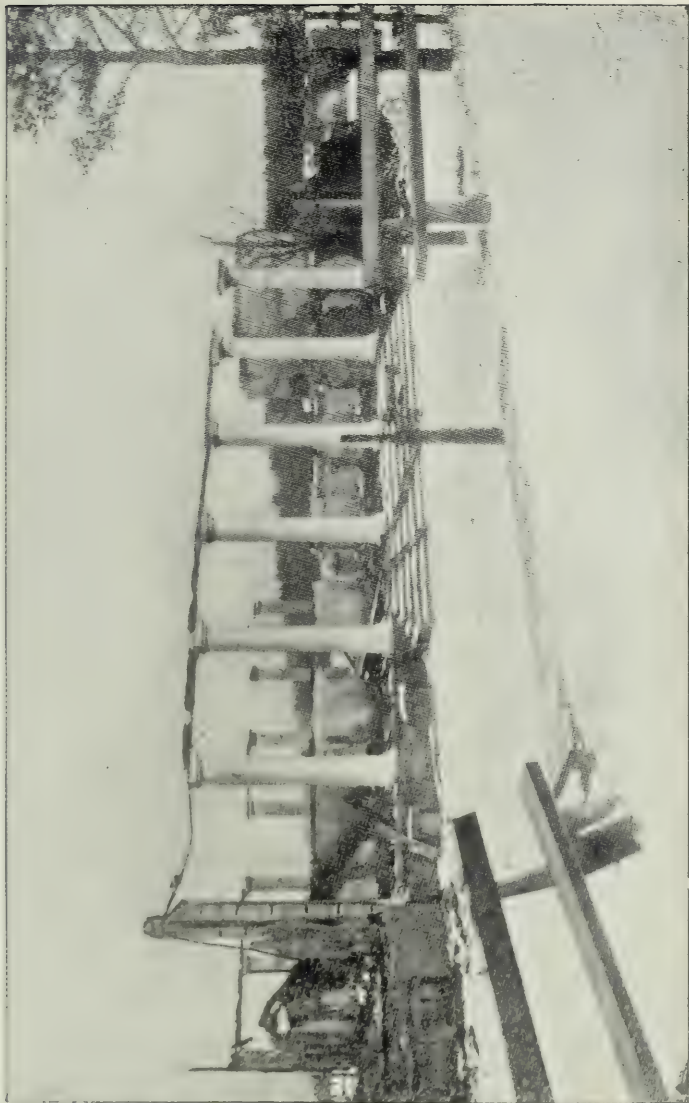
committee, to whom every local committee was obliged to give periodical reports—every fourteen days. The members of the central committee had the right to attend every meeting of the local committees. The central committee was elected by the congress. Every member of a certain body could be admitted or removed only by resolution from the body concerned, without considering the source of the initiative.

(b) In the country the members of several communities were united in the “centres” which maintained regular relations with the local committees.

This in brief is the organisation of the Party.

#### THE FIRST DEMONSTRATIONS OF 1905.

The massacres of the Russian workers in St. Petersburg on the twenty-first of January, 1905, roused a stirring reply from the Lettish workers. On the 25th of the same month the workers of Riga went out on strike. The workers of Libau, Mitau, Windau, Tuckum, and other places followed. Everywhere large



THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE LETTISH WORKERS PARTY IN RIGA AFTER ITS  
DESTRUCTION BY GENERAL ORLOFF.  
( Also see page 10 )

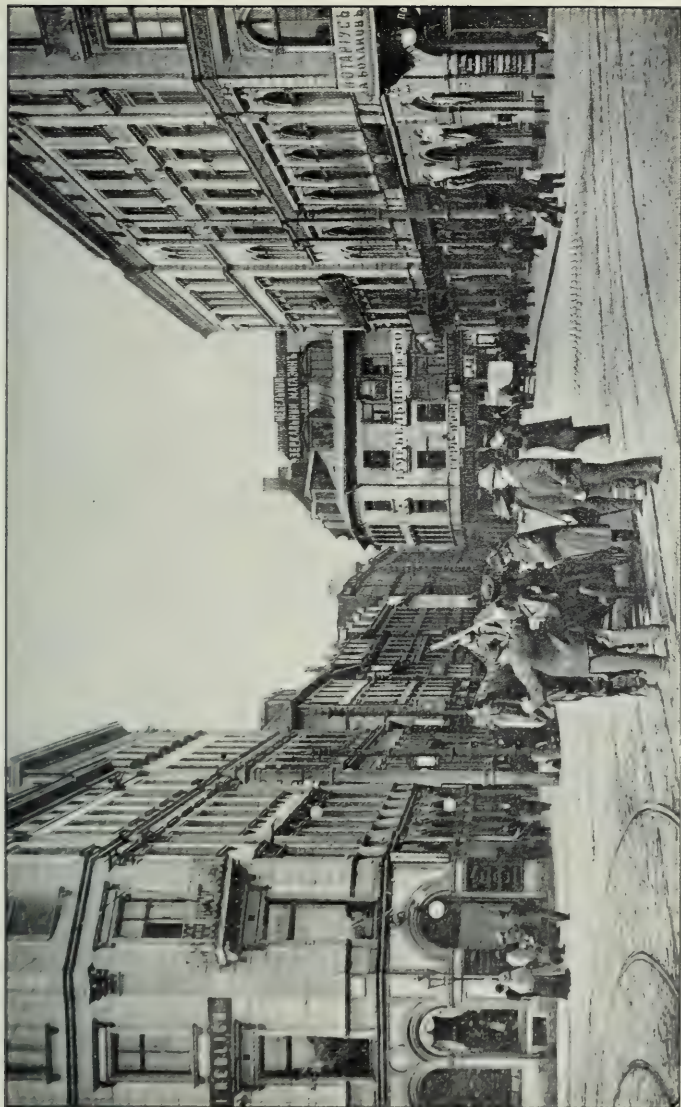


protest meetings and great street demonstrations with red banners were organised. In Riga the movement grew to such dimensions that on the 26th over 60,000 persons participated in a street demonstration. The servants of the Tzar were maddened. Quite unexpectedly, unnecessarily, and without warning, the regiment of non-commissioned officers fired on the peaceful demonstrators. Over fifty dead and more than one hundred injured were swept from the ranks of these helpless demonstrators. This fierce blood shedding sharpened the protest, and the general strike increased and continued for a whole week. The murdered comrades were buried with much solemn celebration, though all the cemeteries were filled with police. The general strike was followed everywhere by local trade strikes; the demands were a nine hours working day, and one rouble (two shillings) as the minimum day's wage. The workers threatened vengeance on the murderers, and the 1st of May showed that they kept their word. The May Day Labour

Festival began with a two and a half days' strike. As the first of May (old style) was on a Sunday, the workers left the factories on Saturday at 12 o'clock (noon), and only returned on Tuesday. The party decided not to demonstrate, as all the streets were crowded with Cossack and other regiments, but several Cossack patrols were dispersed by bombs (in the Wöhrman Park and Grisenhill). For the first time the peasants in the country took part in the May Day Festival. With red banners the peasants went from farm to farm in every community singing revolutionary songs.

#### THE CHURCH DEMONSTRATIONS.

In the summer of 1905 in nearly all the country churches the peasants organised meetings and demonstrations. The number participating ranged from 300 to 3,000. Generally the agitator, with the assent of the community, ascended the pulpit of the village church before the clergyman had begun his service. At other times the community rose from their seats just at the moment when the



MEN ON STRIKE STOPPING THE CAB TRAFFIC IN RIGA.



clergyman began the usual prayer for the Tsar and his house, and demonstratively left the church. Sometimes a collision took place between the loyal nobility and the peasants, in which case the former were beaten. Baron Bistram-Waddox was shot dead in the Sessau Church for suddenly attacking the peasants with revolver and whip. The Baltic Barons had long before inoculated the Lettish peasants with indifference towards religion and the clergy. The parson—called by the people *churchlord*—is selected by the baron, who is the church patron. The nomination is generally distasteful to the people and against the will of the community, and sometimes has to be carried into effect with the help of the police. The peasants protest in various ways—by leaving the church, or boycotting the sermon by singing incessantly a church choral. Nevertheless, in civil affairs, the Lettish peasants were forced to bow before the disagreeable German “churchlord.” The marriage, baptism, or burial services cannot be performed without the aid of the parson,

and the peasants are compelled to pay fees to the odious priest. The parson sometimes exploits the peasants even more than does his patron himself. The Rights of Church Patronage are attached to the manor privilege, so that even a landlord belonging to the orthodox church (for instance Count Shuwaloff) can be a patron of the *evangelical church communities*. The barons used to say that the flock need not know the names of the shepherd whom God has called to guard them (such was the expression of Baron Vietinghoff-Scheel). The unjust dealings of the parsons educated their parish members so far, that even worthy old matrons sometimes went 200 miles into the town to get an "isonytril"—a stinking bomb—for their churchlord. The evil-smelling machine was carefully carried home, and next Sunday exploded in church under the nose of the parson. In such cases the worshippers cheerfully left the church to start a political meeting outside. These meetings were always followed by a collection for the Lettish Social Democratic Workers'

Party, and afterwards by the destruction of the portraits of the Tsar and the recruit lists, or other emblems of despotism in the Town Hall. Sometimes the peasants marched from the church, bearing a red banner, to the landlord to put before him certain demands—higher wages for farm labourers, reduction of rent, some extra facilities in the use of the woods, fishing, etc. Often these demands, or at least some of them, were yielded by the landlord. But this was only in places where the class-feeling was not so bitter, and where the bulk of the peasants all suffered alike from the knout of the Tsar and the whip of the landlord. But in districts where the dispossessed peasant was also ground down by the well-to do peasant-farmers, severe strikes took place.

#### THE PEASANT MOVEMENT IN COURLAND.

The peasant strike in Courland, in July 1905, was undoubtedly one of the most important events of the year. The strike lasted three days during the wheat harvest in the Bausk, Doblen and Mitau districts.

Thirty thousand peasant-workers participated. They demanded a 10 hours' working day, a minimum yearly wage of £30 for male and £22 10s. od. for female workers, the abolition of payment in kind, and separate rooms for each worker. In many places the strikers secured a partial victory. They succeeded in getting a 12 hours' day (formerly they worked in summer from sunrise to sunset) and an increase of 5 to 10 per cent in wages. During the strike the peasants organised demonstrations before the Town Halls and in over 30 places they solemnly committed to flames the portraits of the Tsar, passport copies and many official papers. The crown monies were confiscated in the name of the Social Democratic Party, but the orphans and widows' funds were not touched. On this occasion the nobility—landlords—showed all its usual ignorance and lack of discrimination in regard to the class struggle. Instead of uniting themselves with the well-to-do peasant farmer against the property-less peasant striker, the barons proceeded against both



SENDING MONEY TO THE STATE BANK OF RIGA UNDER MOUNTED MILITARY ESCORT.



peasant-farmers and strikers with an armed force (the arms, however, were immediately afterwards seized by the peasants), and for precisely this reason the farmers took part in the demonstrations on the side of the workers against the predatory excursions of the nobility. The Baltic German nobles maintained their isolation and remained faithful to their historical reputation: "The Great fighteth alone." On the other hand, thanks to their doings, the prestige of the party was appreciatively heightened.

After this widespread movement local magistrates sought the advice of the party's committee in all its administrative work. Notwithstanding, the strike only lasted three days, the nobility succeeded in effecting the proclamation of martial law over the whole of Courland (on the 19th of August, 1905).

#### MARTIAL LAW IN COURLAND AND THE ARISTOCRATIC VOLUNTARY POLICE.

Immediately upon the proclamation of martial law in Courland and the state of siege in Livonia, contingents of Cossacks and

Dragoons were stationed in the nobles' estates. In addition, the nobility procured special levies of Tcherkesses from the Caucasus to act against the Lettish peasants. All the able-bodied men of the Baltic nobility formed a special police service and thereby received power over the lives and property of the Lettish peasants. They fortified and entrenched themselves in their castles and from thence undertook marauding excursions over the farms of the peasantry. The brother of the Hofzumbergen parson—the police chief, Von Rutkowsky, and his assistant Baron von Willsch especially covered themselves with glory.

With his own hand he flogged the farmers, whose labourers had joined in the strike! and the latter personally violated captured peasant girls. The homes of the clergy and landlords (for instance, "Hofzumberg," the estate of L. von Pahlen), were turned into drinking booths and houses of debauchery. Prince Lieven-Fockenhof also acted most barbarously, he abused his authority so far as to order the flogging of the estate officials of the Russian nobleman Naryshkin, in Szagarren,

Whilst the peasant ferment reached its highest point in Courland the town workers of Riga and Libau had resumed the struggle with their employers, who had already withdrawn all the concessions gained in the January and February strikes. The struggle re-opened six months after the memorable day of the massacre of the Riga workers (26th of July).\* The builders, cabinet makers and metal workers immediately joined the factory workers. During August and September the average number of strikers each day was about 40,000. The resources of the party were taxed to the utmost to bring the struggle to a successful issue.

A typical instance of "restoring law and order" under Martial law, is the following related by an eye witness.

On March 11th (1907), at 1 p.m., as Colonel Dumbadze was proceeding in his carriage from Yalta to Livadia, Crimea, a bomb was thrown

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\* The memory of the fallen comrades was celebrated by large meetings and demonstrations outside the factories.

at him from the villa of Mme. Novikoff, situated on the road. The bomb fell behind the carriage and slightly wounded Dumbadze and three members of his suite, including the driver. The young man who had thrown the bomb committed suicide on the spot. . . .

Colonel Dumbadze and his driver were thrown by the force of the explosion on the ground. The colonel soon rose in a great rage, and ordered his escort to summon troops at once from Livadia.

“I have been insulted” shouted Dumbadze to his soldiers. “Sack the house and raze it to the ground!”

The soldiers immediately set to work, Dumbadze being present all the time and giving orders. The soldiers invaded the villa of Mme. Novikoff, as well as the one next to it, which was separated by a beautiful garden of old cypresses and other trees. Both villas were full of people, men, women, old and young. The soldiers threw themselves at these perfectly innocent people and pushed them out on the road by the butt ends of their rifles.

“ Kick them out, kick them out ! ” shouted Dumbadze.

Even women and children were not allowed to put on their hats, and nobody was permitted to take their purses with them. They were driven out by blows and threats to open fire at them.

“ Break everything ! ” was the command of the maddened colonel. . . .

When absolutely nothing more remained to be destroyed the first villa was poured over with kerosene and set on fire.

The latest news to hand concerning Colonel Dumbadze is his promotion, by a special ukaze of the Tsar, to the rank of Major-General. A fitting sequence !

#### THE OCTOBER GENERAL STRIKE.

These strikes had hardly finished when the great railway strike all over Russia began. Riga, Mitau, Libau, Windau, Tuckum, Walk and other smaller towns immediately joined the movement and adopted the common watchword : “ A constitutional assembly based upon universal, equal, direct and secret ballot.”

The general strike continued for 5 days after the sham manifesto of 30th October; its promised rights of free speech, meeting and union were put to a strong test. In Riga alone in the meetings organised by the Socialist Federal Committee\* from 60,000 to 100,000 persons participated. All the public halls, including even the "sacred German theatre were taken by the people for public meetings; and when the demand for the deliverance of the political prisoners was granted (in the dungeons of Riga, Libau, Mitau, Wenden and other prisons there were about 2,000 political prisoners), the socialist organisations declared the general strike to be at an end.

The nobility and the Baltic bourgeoisie endeavoured to quench the rejoicing of the people by organising—with the help of the Riga and Libau police—the so-called "black-hundred." The horrors of Odessa seemed to them worthy of emulation. They armed a

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\* The Federal Committee consisted of the representatives from the Lettish, Jewish, Esthonian, Lithuanian and German Socialist organisations in Riga.

mob of hooligans and on Saturday, November 5th, began to plunder the shops of the poorer Jewish inhabitants of Moskauer Vorstadt (a suburb in Riga). On the same day the manager of a large bank in Riga, Mr. Starr, boasted of having given 14,000 roubles for the Jewish massacres. In the Sandstrasse the manager of another bank (the Riga Exchange Bank), Mr. Wilde von Wildemann, personally distributed a printed leaflet headed: "Kill the Jews!" Excitement prevailed on the Exchange. But the workers' militia (armed members of the Social Democratic Party) quickly put an end to these bourgeois agitations. They resisted the "black-hundred" and in the skirmish killed over 30 of them and arrested several notorious spies, (amongst them the well-known informer, Mr. Teichman and Baron Engelhardt).\*

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\*Arresting them the socialist representatives made an investigation with the assistance of several witnesses from the inhabitants and then transferred them to the Governor who liberated them. Later on the spy, Mr. Teichman, repented his deeds and wrote an apology to the Federal Committee. He was then dismissed by the Governor General and later even arrested.

also lost several members. By Sunday the Jewish massacres were already over. In Libau the workers arrested and shot a spy who organised the "black hundred." Thus quietness was again established.

#### THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT.

In the August and September strikes the necessity of trade unions was already felt. Therefore, after the October general strike, the organisation of trade unions was pushed forward by the party. During November alone, there were organised in Riga, Unions in the following trades: metal workers, wood workers, textile workers, rubber workers, chemical workers, servants, tailors and bookbinders, compositors, builders, gardeners, having a total membership of about 15,000. In Libau at the same time there were organised trade unions with about 5,000 workers. Even in the small town of Goldingen a trade union was formed. The object of the trade-union movement can be briefly described as follows: The support of the members when

on strike and the furtherance of the class struggle in general.\* The unions were formed according to industry and not to trades.

There is no doubt that this trade union movement was under the direct influence of the social democracy. When at the union meetings the Social Democratic Party posted up the party lists, over 40,000 persons gave in their names as new members of the Lettish Social Democratic Worker's Party. At the first general meeting of the Metal Workers' Union, on December 3rd, 1905, the members

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\*Extract from the Rules of the Rubber-worker's Union in Riga. 15/1/05.

### *I. The Object of the Union.*

The Union's object is: (a) to defend the legitimate and trade interests of the workers and to promote the class conscious feeling of its members; (b) to raise their intellectual and moral abilities; (c) to support its members materially when on strike, and to supply them with travelling expenses when obliged to look for work in other places; (d) the furtherance of the class struggle in general.

### *II. The Admission of Members.*

Workers of either sex can be admitted as members without regard to nationality or religion, by the support

decided to give to the Lettish Social Democratic Workers' Party £50 for a new printing plant, also a yearly contribution of £22, and £50 for the Russian workers locked out in St. Petersburg. The workers in Libau also collected £400 for the St. Petersburg workers. The trade-unionists took part in the Social Democratic meetings which were always overcrowded.

After the 30th of October meetings were organised all over the country and the peasants to the number of many thousands participated in them.

of two members. A month is allowed during which time other members may protest against the admission.

### *III. About the Strikes.*

(a) The strike in a certain factory branch can be decided upon by the committee of the union with the assistance of the branch representative.

(b) The strike of a whole factory can be decided upon by the council of all the factory branch representatives.

(c) A general strike in a whole industry can be decided by a general members' meeting at which two-thirds of the members must be present. The political general strike can be decided only by the Social Democratic Party.

## MARTIAL LAW IN LIVONIA.

Now we come to the proclamation of martial law in Livonia on the 5th of December. It was received by the workers in Riga with a four days' general strike. The strike of post and telegraph workers had not yet finished. During the dispute the workers forged arms in all the factories. The authorities of the town trembled before the approaching revolution. The governor-general, the governor, the marshal of the nobility, Baron Meyendorff, the chief magistrate, Baron von Oettingen, and the Mayor of Riga published a telegram in which they were supposed to have prayed the government to abolish martial law. But it was a pure deception, for as a matter of actual knowledge the governor on the very same day (8th December) secretly asked the government for new troops and gunboats. The attitude of the strikers was reserved and calm, and it was precisely this calmness which frightened the authorities. I will add a few lines about the general strike from the "Düna Zeitung," the organ of

the Baltic nobility. "Düna Ztg." 30. xi, 1905).

It reads :—" From Friday, 25th November, till Tuesday, the 29th, Riga was under general strike. This strike was the people's reply to the proclamation of martial law, which was introduced all over Livonia at the initiative of the military authorities\* . . . Already on the eve of the general strike the officials and servants of the Riga-Orel railway line assembled in the workshops to discuss their attitude towards the authorities in view of the institution of martial law. About 7 o'clock (the meeting began at 6 o'clock in the evening) the Chief of the Railway Police appeared and demanded that the meeting should be closed and the workshops emptied, because the governor-general did not permit such meetings. As the demand was not complied with two companies of infantry were sent for. But even that did not intimidate the assembly, and only when the signal for firing had been given did the meeting close after having hastily decided to join in the

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\*Read the Baltic nobility.

general strike. Directly afterwards the steam of the locomotives was allowed to escape and all the Station lights were extinguished. The strike was only decided upon in meetings on Thursday, and on Friday morning it was announced in handbills at all the street corners. Much discipline among the strikers was also manifested upon this occasion. All the factories were stopped. Even the street trams and the Dūna boats ceased, the drivers being compelled to join the strike. All the large shops, warehouses, restaurants, hotels, public houses, etc., were closed. Exceptions were allowed only to the small shops. All business of every kind was at a standstill, and the inhabitants quietly paced about the streets. Here and there groups were standing reading the handbills on the walls. Everywhere perfect order reigned and there was no drunkenness or excess of any kind. The theatres were closed, no papers appeared. The streets were patrolled by the military, Cossacks with their lances rode through the streets and at several points

the ambulances of the Red Cross Society were posted."

Thus we see how carefully everything was prepared for bloodshed.

"The second and third day showed the same picture. Everywhere the same awed silence; no one knew what the next hours might bring forth. The anxious feeling was intensified when news came that large meetings were to be held in the suburbs and the tension became greater still when cannon were placed at several points of the town. But this day also passed without any untoward events. Throughout the town meetings were being held. Even the German theatre, hitherto devoted exclusively to art, was compelled to witness meetings at which agitators addressed the people. . . ."

The article ended with the following lines :

"Closing our account of the strike we once more insist upon this, that the discipline of the strikers was exemplary and the workers themselves did everything to avoid disturbances."



SEARCHING FOR FIREARMS IN THE STREETS OF RIGA.



So we see that the reason for the proclamation of martial law was not to prevent excesses by the workers. No, it lay much deeper.

#### THE CONGRESS OF PRIMARY SCHOOLMASTERS.

A Congress of 900 Primary School-teachers assembled at Riga at the end of November and lasted a full week. The old methods of organisation and instruction were sharply criticised. The Congress decided to demand that all lessons shall be given in the mother tongue of the pupils. A new school programme was elaborated; resolutions for the disestablishment of the church, and for the separation of the schools from the church were passed. The obligatory religious lesson was struck off the school syllabus with the ready assent of the parents who were present. At its close the Congress expressed its solidarity with the Lettish Social Democratic Workers' Party; in short, the Congress was thoroughly social-democratic in its expression. Here again we give a short account of one of the sittings of the Congress taken from the afore-mentioned landlord's paper, the "Düna

Zeitung." It states on the 15th November that:—"The third day of the Congress ended with the acceptance of two resolutions. The first concerned religious teaching in schools and read as follows: 'Taking into consideration (1) that the religion and science of to-day contradict each other, (2) that religion is a matter of conscience which cannot be imparted by teaching this Congress recognises the necessity of the separation of the church from the State and the school from the church, the teaching of religion in the schools ought therefore to be excluded.'"

The second resolution concerns the political faith of the Congress, and is as follows:—"Recognising the important part the working class have to take in the realization of the ideals of human welfare, the Congress expresses its unity with the efforts, aims and ideals of the Social Democratic Workers' Party and decides to support to its utmost the struggle of the Party." . . .

The results of this Primary School Congress represented the fruits of all the efforts of the



ARRESTING A SUSPECT IN THE STREET.



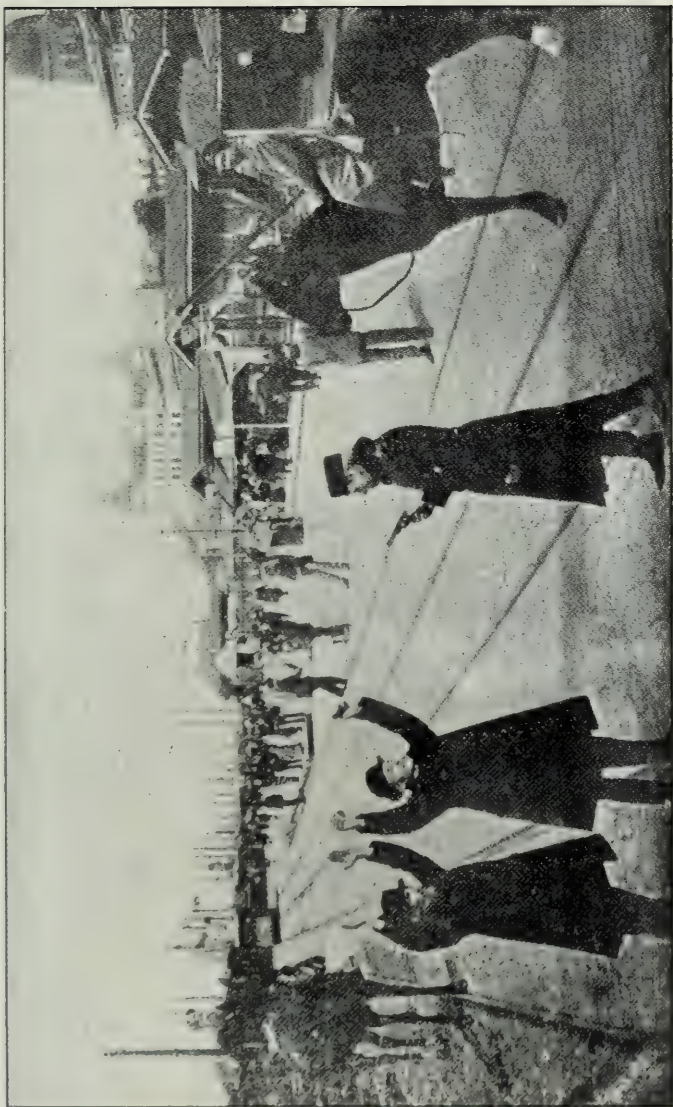
Social Democratic Party upon the education question; the forcible Russification of the primary school by the Russian government did the rest. The Congress elected a permanent council and the delegates left the Congress with the firm intention of immediately fulfilling the accepted resolutions."

#### THE CONGRESS OF PEASANTS' DELEGATES.

The decisions which the Primary School Congress came to were well worth an attempt to realise and the necessary help for that came from the Peasants' Congress. This Congress established the revolutionary parish councils in the country. In the Baltic Peasant Congress there participated about 1,000 peasants from over 600 villages in Courland and Livonia. The governor-general forbade the Congress to meet, but the peasants ignored his orders and on the 2nd of December the Congress was opened with considerable ceremony. The police and Cossacks surrounded the place of meeting but did not interfere. The Congress discussed the political situation and the want of local self-administration in

the Baltic Provinces. Autocracy and local feudalism were sharply criticised. Several resolutions were accepted concerning the immediate creation of peasant councils in every community, elected by a general meeting of all the village. The duties of these parish councils were to be that of discharging the old officials and of taking under their own control all the institutions concerning the local life of the peasantry and the peasants were to defend, if necessary with arms, the elected councils from any attacks of the nobles or the government. The Congress sat for three days and dissolved with the deliberate intention of immediately electing the local administrative councils.

The bourgeois press tried to work up a scare about a prospective Lettish Republic, and the separation of the Baltic Provinces from Russia, etc. The Riga branch of the Social Democratic Party obtained a copy of a telegram sent by the Governor of Livonia to the Russian Minister of the Interior. It was in cypher but they also secured the means



SEARCH FOR ARMS IN A STREET IN RIGA.



of interpreting it, and it contained the following:—

“An external peace reigns in Riga. The Socialist Party has transferred its activity to the country districts. In many villages surrounding Riga, meetings have been organised in which revolutionary agents joined. At these meetings it was decided not to recognise the government institutions and administration or the law courts, and subsequently they dismissed all the officials, in some cases with violence. Already in the districts of Wenden, Wolmar, Walk and Dorpat, special administrative councils have been established, and in the former district murder and plunder continue even now. As the revolutionary party has decided to establish *an independent government*, an armed rising is to be expected. The Lettish and Esthonian papers point to the successes in Finland and Poland. I consider the position very grave, especially as, notwithstanding my representation on the matter, the troops have not been reinforced. It is absolutely necessary

without a moment's delay to strengthen the local troops by two additional regiments; to place Livonia under martial law and to appoint the commander of the garrison—General Poppen, who is a wise and energetic man—temporary Governor General. In addition it is necessary to station in Riga harbour a reliable warship, wherein the money, amounting to several millions, belonging to the government and private banks could be placed for safety. The garrison in Livonia belongs to the Petersburg and Wilno military districts, but it is advisable to place them under the Governor General. I am doing all I can by severity and proclamations, but I am afraid I shall not bring the population to a right mind. Of very great assistance to me in the present crisis would be an Ukase instituting martial law which I could use at the right moment.”

(Signed) Governor Sweginzeff.”

The Socialist Party published this telegram, accompanied with the following comment :

“We are convinced that the Governor of

Livonia is aware that the institution of martial law means collision with the people and a general strike in all branches of industry. We are also convinced that the Governor knows he is not speaking the truth about certain things in this telegram. Only a person utterly ignorant of local life and conditions could assert that the aim of the Lettish people or the local revolutionary party, is the separation of the Baltic Provinces from Russia, and the establishment of an independent government by an armed rising. But the real purpose of this telegram becomes quite clear to us if we take it in conjunction with the journey of the Marshal of Nobility, Baron von Meyendorff, to St. Petersburg, and the recent insinuating articles in the nobles' paper. The Baltic nobility, like all the reactionary elements in Russia, seeking to retain its crumbling power, as a last extremity drowns the movement for liberty and justice in torrents of blood. For this glorious purpose they could not find a better man than General Poppen, who would act entirely as a

tool in the hands of the higher powers. That it is intended to provoke trouble in order to have an excuse for proclaiming martial law is proved by the order of the Governor to the District Police to forbid all meetings in the country and to arrest the speakers, this undoubtedly will bring the people into collision with the authorities. Personally we do not fear martial law because the cause of Freedom cannot really be checked by repression and coercion, but we *are* concerned to warn the people of the Baltic Provinces of the danger which threatens them, and to disclose these facts of deception in high places, and submit them to the judgment of public opinion."

This famous telegram was afterwards printed in all the local papers. The "Düna Zeitung," the nobles' paper, also published it, and said it was a very grave indiscretion to allow a secret official telegram to leak out and be interpreted to the public. Thus the authenticity of this telegram was admitted.

The Government granted the desired per-

mission, and on December 25th, the Governor of Livonia produced the Imperial sanction for martial law. But the general strike of December 8th to 12th compelled him to a temporary capitulation. Nor had he yet obtained the required reinforcements, although he expected them daily.

Seeing that a fresh struggle was imminent the Social Democrat Party met and drew up several resolutions concerning ways and means in the event of further troubles.

#### WORK OF THE PEASANTS' SELF-ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCILS.

How zealously the peasants carried out the resolutions of their Congress is seen by the fact that within two weeks from the date of the Congress self-administrative Councils were elected in nearly all the villages.

In order to prove that the peasants were not guilty of excesses it is necessary to mention that they decided to take under their management the estates of those Barons who had fled from fear of the approaching revolution, that these estates might be preserved

*from devastation and plunder.* The local councils were charged to make out lists of such estates and inventories of the property.

This shows clearly enough that men who made such decisions could not be called murderers and plunderers. It was also decided that the wages of the peasant workers should be paid in advance up to April 23rd, 1906, the date of the conclusion of their agreements. Simple justice demanded this. Baron Manteuffell, for instance, had agreed with his peasant workers for a whole year, but now he escaped without having paid any wages, and it was therefore necessary to take steps to prevent the peasants from being thrown out of work without food or the means of purchasing it.

But by this time the peasants and their Councils clearly understood that the Tsar's manifesto of October 30th, in which certain freedom was granted, was not intended to be sincere, but was wrenched from him much against his will by the powerful wave of protest which rolled all over the Empire in

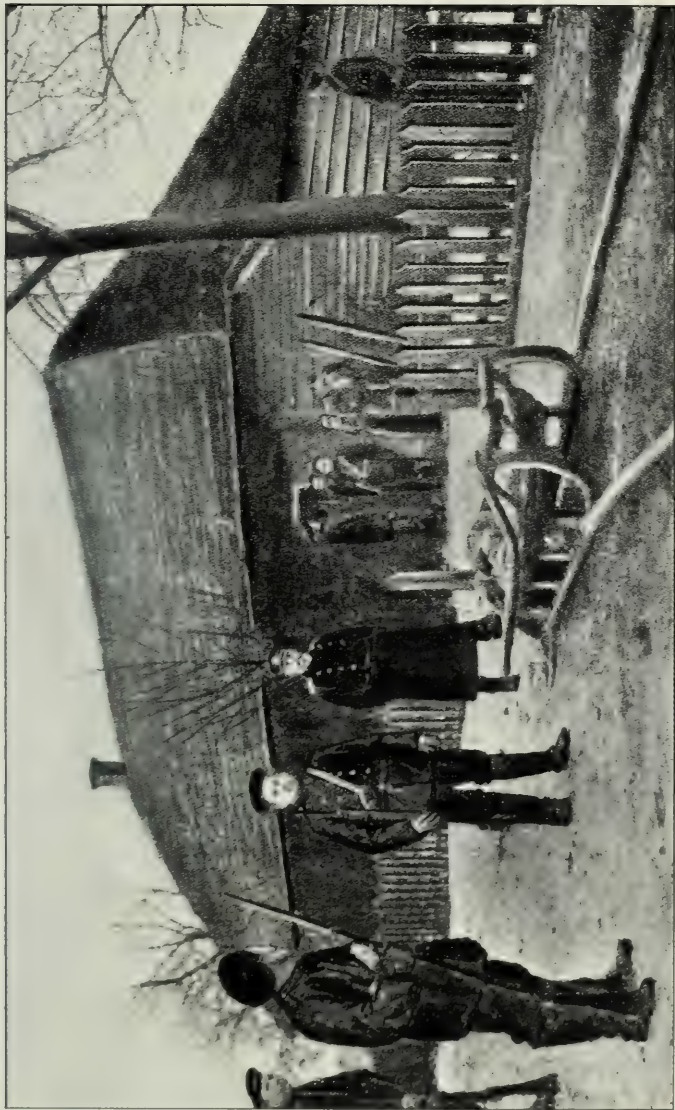
the shape of the general strike accompanied in several cases—at Saratoff, Baku, Kieff and other places—by armed strife. The knowledge of this induced the Lettish workers to pass a resolution and afterwards put it in force all over the country. This resolution was as follows :

“Taking into consideration the fact that autocratic government has always been the most cruel oppressor of the people ; and that this continues even after the manifesto of October 30th, when peaceful inhabitants, who try to realise the promise in the manifesto are arrested, imprisoned, shot and hanged, the Lettish people conclude that real freedom can never come from the existing government, and therefore workers and peasants decide to establish for themselves local administrative councils and to defend them if necessary by force, and together with the Russian people work for the convocation of a constitutional assembly.”

It was decided to take over and control the telephones, telegraphs and railways. Instant

release of the imprisoned peasants was demanded. When the Chief of Police of Hasenpoth refused to release his prisoners the peasants' local council ordered the militia to assemble, and in seven hours 1,500 peasants were under arms, although it is true that their weapons were very primitive.

Now we may give an instance showing with what mildness they treated even their worst enemies. The following is the attitude adopted by the population in Alt-Schwaneburg (the same people who were afterwards nearly all burned alive in the church by General Orloff) at the trial of Baron Manfred Wolf for double murder. This noble was the chief of a Cossack detachment in Stomersee. Driven from there with his Cossacks, he was made captive by the people's militia in the Vitebsk district and sent back for trial to Alt-Schwaneburg where he had personally killed two peasants. Some of the peasants demanded his life. But their spokesman addressed them with the following



"A PUNITIVE EXPEDITION." SEARCHING A SUSPECTED PEASANT'S HOUSE.

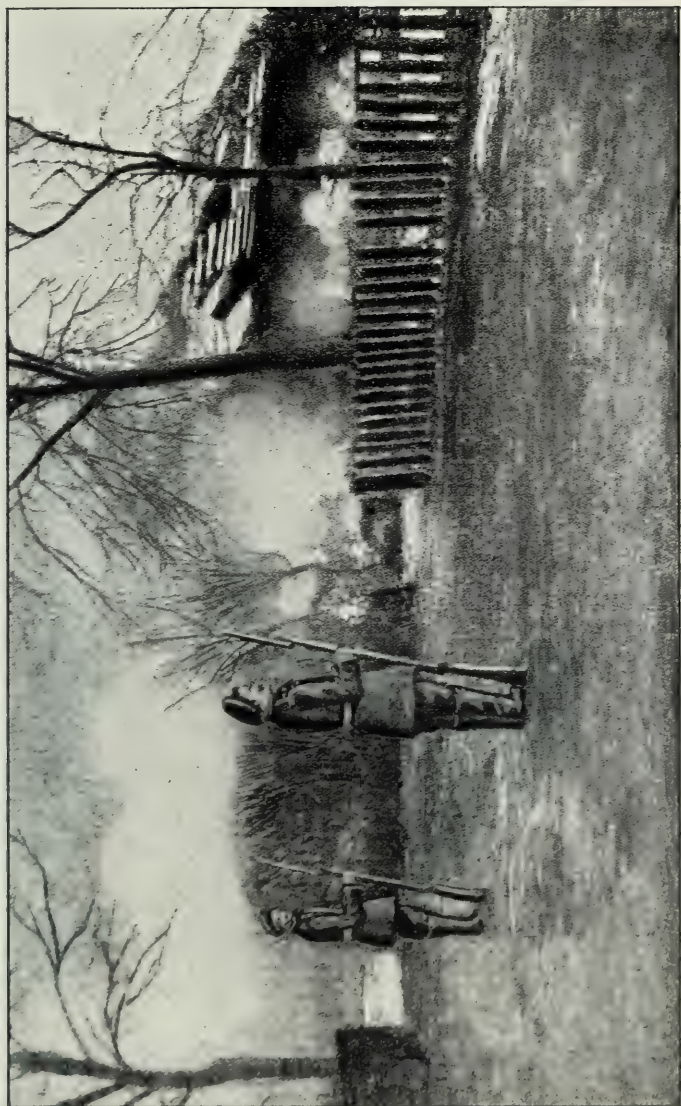


words: "Citizens! Let us not act as do our enemies, the nobles. We, who have been always opposed to capital punishment, have we now the right to sentence a person to death? Certainly not; we must preserve our principles from such a stain. Think for a moment of what the next generation would say, if we, the champions of freedom, pass a sentence of death, even if upon our worst enemy. No! We must not follow the example given by our foes. At the same time, however, we cannot allow a murderer to live amongst us, and therefore let us expel the baron for ever from our community. Let him go free and bear witness to the other nobles of the way we treat our enemies." So the peasants unanimously decided to expel Baron von Wolf from Alt-Schwaneburg. Thus did the revolutionists judge their enemies! But now we shall see how differently the people were treated by the authorities.

#### THE ARMED RISING.

Soon a serious armed rising began and

spread all over the country. It was provoked by the nobles. They attacked the first mass meetings of the peasants and formally plundered the small towns inhabited by peasants. Thus, for instance, Baron von Recke-Durben, with military help, raided the peasants' farms and the mills at Schlock, near Tuckum. Nearly 5,000 kilograms of flour were carried off by the soldiers. At the same time the inhabitants of the town of Tuckum were whipped and assaulted almost every day by the dragoons stationed there. Peasants coming into the town were ill-treated by the soldiery. The district chief of police, Baron von Raden, gave no heed to the complaints of the inhabitants. Is it to be wondered at then, that the inhabitants of Tuckum were at last driven to attack the dragoons, and for three days fought bravely against General Huronshenkoff's army, consisting of over 2,000 men? More than 24 dragoons and several soldiers of other regiments found their death in this bitter encounter. The people also lost several men from their ranks. Being unable to



THE HOUSE IN FLAMES AFTER THE SEARCH.



subdue the town without completely destroying it, General Huronshenkoff offered to allow the revolutionists to depart from the town with their arms and banners. Immediately after the departure of these armed revolutionists, Baron von Recke had the cowardice to put to death over 60 peaceful inhabitants, amongst whom were several women and children.

The dead dragoons were taken to Mitau, and there the governor of Courland, General Kniazeff, gave orders that the bodies should be first mutilated and afterwards photographed. The photographs were later distributed amongst the military in order to instigate them against the Letts. The truth of this statement can be proved by the evidence of doctors (not one of whom is a Socialist) who were present when the bodies of the dragoons were placed in the train for Mitau—then un mutilated. Proof may also be obtained from some of General Horunshenkeff's soldiers who were present. Afterwards General Horunshenkoff revenged his Tuckum defeat

by the bombardment and complete pillage of the small town of Talsen.

In places where the revolutionists were strongly armed the revolt often ended without bloodshed. Thus the garrison at Windau gave up their arms and left the town by the order of the local Social Democratic Committee. Public institutions, such as banks, post offices, railways, etc., were taken over by the new administrative committees and everything was continued in perfect order.

The same took place in Jacobstadt, Walk, Goldingen, Hasenpoth and other small towns. In these places the nobility were powerless and they vented their wrath upon the less protected homes of the peasantry. In some places, however, they suffered severely for this. Thus, for instance, upon hearing of the murder of some members of a village council by the barons, the revolutionary militia of Stockmanshof, Kokenhusen and Lenewarden compelled the nobility to vacate their castles and dispersed their several dragoon and cossack detachments, while at the same time they



BARON ERWIN WOLFF'S HOUSE (FRONT VIEW).

PARTLY TO PREVENT THE QUARTERING OF TROOPS IN THE COUNTRY DISTRICTS AND ALSO IN ORDER TO PUNISH CERTAIN OF THE NOBILITY FOR THEIR BRUTALITIES AND EXCESSES, THE PEASANTS DELIBERATELY DESTROYED SEVERAL LARGE COUNTRY RESIDENCES.



arrested 35 of the nobles and their servants. These nobles later begged the Livonian knighthood council to petition the Social Democratic Party in Riga to come to terms with them. The council called a meeting of nobles and selected Baron Rosen Gross Roop to enter into negotiations with the Socialist Party. The party promised to send representatives to Lenewarden to intercede on behalf of the imprisoned nobles. The delegates, however, were too late, for they found that four of the nobles, guilty of most ferocious outrages, had already been summarily executed by the peasants. The servants of the nobles were, however, immediately liberated, their arms being confiscated. Then the delegates of the Socialist Party put before the nobles the following conditions under which they might secure their liberty :

The whole Baltic nobility must signify their consent to the following conditions :

- (1) The nobility and the military in their command to deliver up their arms to the Socialist Party.

(2) They undertake to do all in their power to secure the abolition of martial law in the Baltic Provinces.

(3) They agree to liberate all the arrested revolutionists.

(4) They consent to acknowledge the new administrative councils.

(5) They promise not to provide accommodation for troops on their estates.

(6) They must conclude their services in the special volunteer police force and agree to remain in custody till the fulfilment of these conditions.

Shortly afterwards all the nobles left the police service, and their paper, the "Düna Zeitung," officially published a copy of the petition from the Baltic Knighthood praying the Government to abolish martial law. Although the Social Democratic Party well knew that they were not sincere in this petition, and even had proofs that the nobility were secretly asking for fresh troops from the Vilna military district, still they thought it best to liberate the nobles, at the same time,



BARON ERWIN WOLFF'S HOUSE (SIDE VIEW).



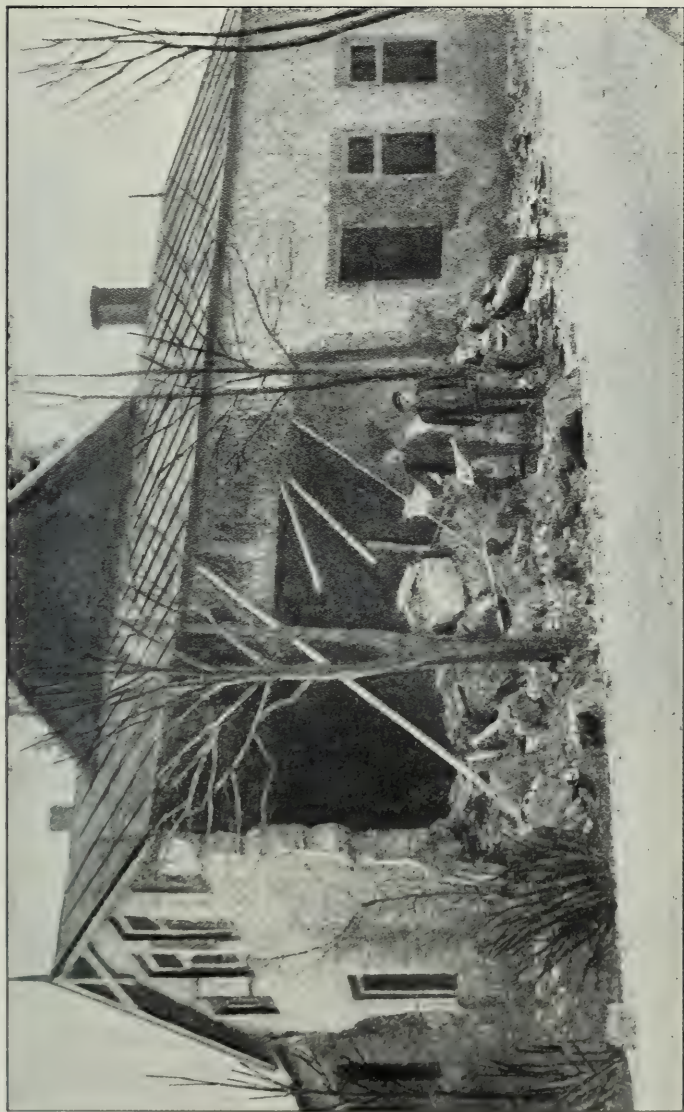
however, informing the whole country of the humiliating terms of the capitulation.

As a war indemnity from the nobles, the people had already at their own initiative dismantled over 200 castles. This was largely a matter of tactics, rendered necessary in order to stop the quartering of military in the estate buildings and the fortified castles, and also to obtain arms. Great quantities of the latter were discovered in the fortified castles and confiscated, and the offending troops were driven away.

When these proud old castles, homes of slavery for centuries, were given over by the peasants to the flames a fearful crackling began ; it was the explosion of ammunition, and even dynamite, which had been concealed there for use against the people. It is instructive to note here that the nobles had already stored up arms and ammunition before the manifesto of 30th October. Thus, for instance, in Stockmanshoff, the revolutionists confiscated from the barons a splendid supply of Mauser pistols. Indeed, the greater

part of the peasants' armaments were confiscated from the nobles.

Notwithstanding all these successes of the people in different places, the fight at Tuckum showed that it was impossible to expect the rising to have a successful conclusion against the well-equipped military of the Government ; hence the Lettish workers would not agree to the declaration of a general revolution, in conjunction with the Russian insurgents, all over Russia. Believing that the revolutionary party was not yet strong enough for the step, they preferred not to hazard a defeat. The event justified them. Except in Moscow, Ekaterinoslav, and a few other places the armed rising was fulfilled only on paper. The Government made good use of the advantage this gave them. In Moscow the struggle was one of the most heroic ever known in the history of revolutions, and yet the workers were finally beaten. Whilst the success of an armed rising in the towns was so doubtful, the rising in the country districts, thanks to the provocation of



A HOUSE INHABITED BY SOME LETTISH REVOLUTIONISTS, BLOWN UP BY THE  
PUNITIVE EXPEDITION.



the nobles, was already an accomplished fact. It was not a rebellion after the manner of Moscow's revolt. The peasants did not erect barricades, they simply dismissed the local officials, appointed their own local self-government, and refused to recognise the authorities, and, only when necessary, defended their institutions with arms. In this positive work the people had more hope of success than in an offensive struggle with the military.

In spite of the subsequent "punishment expeditions" of the Government, which have been engaged in hanging and shooting daily for the last twelve months, so that thousands of the people have been thus wantonly killed, it has been found impossible to stamp out this form of revolution. In face of the most cruel and brutal repression the struggle is still continuing. Indeed, partly as a result of this very brutality, every honest man in the Baltic Provinces is now a revolutionist, or, at least, is regarded as such, and therefore in order to subdue the revolution it is necessary to exter-

minate our whole population. Directly the "punishment expedition" departs from a district the peasants again abolish the newly-imposed government officials, and establish their own councils as before.

#### THE WORK OF THE TZAR'S PUNISHMENT EXPEDITIONS.

Now let us enquire as to the methods of these punitive expeditions. The counter-revolution which is proceeding against the inhabitants of the Baltic Provinces is organised on a very simple plan. The barons supply the punitive expeditions with "Proscription lists" and all the persons named thereon are put to death without trial. The expeditions proceed through the country and in every village from ten to thirty persons are shot and hundreds more flogged. The members of the peasants' administrative councils and all who are suspected of being agitators are hanged, generally on trees and telegraph poles on the highway. In ten months over four hundred communities have been punished in this manner in the Baltic



“RESTORING LAW AND ORDER.”

REVOLUTIONISTS SHOT AND LEFT BY THE ROADSIDE IN THE BALTIC COUNTRY DISTRICTS.



Provinces alone, three thousand persons have been shot and hanged, and two thousand peasant farms have been burnt to the ground or blown up by the military and everything belonging to the occupants destroyed. The nobility of Stockmanshoff themselves, supported by the military, put seventeen peasant farms to the flames last Christmas eve, saying it was the Christmas gift the Lettish peasants deserved.

One or two more instances, out of a great number, of the horrible and brutal deeds of the counter-revolution, may be cited here.

In Windau the military on the night of the 22nd of December surprised four members of the local committee of the Socialists. They were all asleep and the officer ordered the soldiers to carry the four men on their bayonet points out into the street and there he had them tortured to death. The parents of one of the young men—Mr. Karkling—besought the officer in pity to let them have the body of their unfortunate son, but only after they had presented him with a thousand roubles did he consent to this.

In the small Livonian town of Fellin, in which place there was not even a branch of the Socialist party, Baron von Sievers, a land owner and also the chief of the local punishment expedition, arrested and condemned to death forty-nine persons without any pretence whatever of trial. Before their execution they were compelled, in the presence of their families and relatives, to dig their own graves. Baron Sievers then ordered them to kneel down on the edges of the graves and the soldiers were commanded to shoot from behind and to aim at their heads. The result of this most inhuman proceeding was to scatter the skulls of these unfortunate and heroic men all around the excavations, whilst the headless corpses tumbled into the graves. The spectacle was so terrible that some of the women who were compelled to be present—the wives, mothers and sisters of the condemned men—instantly went raving mad.

In another place the corpses of the executed peasants were hanged in the windows of a dismantled castle on the highroad as a warn-



THE PUNITIVE EXPEDITION. ARREST OF A SUSPECT.



ing to the inhabitants not to join the revolutionists. A volume of similar acts of fiendish cruelty in the country districts could be given.

In the towns it was no better, sometimes even worse, for the revolutionists were not only shot but also, before this, most terribly tortured, so that even death was sought as a happy release. As an example I will quote from a letter I received from a friend who was arrested and tortured and only escaped, through the assistance of some comrades, from the hands of his persecutors a few hours before the time fixed for his execution.

The letter was sent to me with the expressed hope that some of the more important English newspapers might be induced to publish it and so assist somewhat to enlighten British opinion regarding the most dastardly character of the acts of the Russian Government in the Baltic Provinces. Extracts from it were published in the "Manchester Guardian," and read as follows :—

April, 1906.

"On the 26th of January of this year the

police and military surrounded and entered a restaurant in Mill Street, Riga, arresting all who were present. A strict search was immediately made ; nothing was found save a few leaflets and several passports on the floor, and on a window-ledge a Browning revolver and a small dagger. All whose passports had been viséd, or were not under suspicion of the local police, were liberated. Those arrested were divided into two groups, numbering respectively fourteen and four. The soldiers guarding the smaller group were instructed to take especial care of their charge. The four consisted of Mr. Lapse, Mr. Rosenthal, Mr. Gr . . . and myself. Eight soldiers and one officer composed our guard. The latter commanded us not to stare about as we passed through the streets, but to look straight in front only, under penalty of being instantly shot. In about ten minutes we reached the Central Police Station, and were passed into the " Detective " department before the chiefs of which we four were immediately taken. The officer of our guard declared " these four

men were armed." This charge astounded us, for we all knew that only one revolver and the small dagger had been found in the restaurant.

"Again our names and passports were demanded. I had studied my passport well, and therefore could easily answer any questions. The others gave their addresses but I could not disclose mine, and my passport had not been viséd by the police. Finally three of us were locked in a corridor, every other place being quite full, but our comrade, Mr. Lapse, was locked in a small ante-room, the police guarding him strictly.

"I was in a strange and doubtful condition. I knew that the police had been looking for me for about three years for several political 'offences,' also I was aware of the fact that one of the spies who had already betrayed several of my comrades, knew my face and some of my activities.

"Nevertheless I determined not to disclose my family name, but to keep to the name given in my passport, knowing that the police could not then trace anyone else through me.

“ Our arrests took place at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, and at 8 o'clock the three of us were again examined by the chief.

“ He demanded the name of the owner of the revolver, threatening to shoot us if we refused to answer. Neither of us acknowledged that we knew each other previously.

“ Again we were sent back and again recalled, but this time separately. Comrade Gr. . . was called first. After a few moments we heard heartsickening screams and lamentations. I involuntarily shuddered, knowing that we were all to be terribly tortured.

“ I felt much concerned at our helpless position ; our enemies could do with us whatever they liked and we could not make the slightest resistance.

“ My reflections were cut short by the entrance of Comrade Gr. . . , his face covered with blood. . . .

“ I was called next. I calmly entered the room and found there five police officers and one detective. I was ordered to write my name, which was compared with the signature

on the passport and found to be identical, nevertheless they accused me of having a false passport. I said with certainty that it was a true one. I had scarcely finished my answer when I received a blow in my face, and then a second one from a policeman's fist. I stumbled back but immediately received a kick from behind. With a great struggle I placed my back against the wall and faced my enemies; then an officer ran up to me, clapped a revolver to my head, screaming: 'Be quiet! be quiet, you dog!!' I protested, and again he threatened to shoot me. I was pulled from the wall and again my name was demanded, also my address and the names of my friends; I merely repeated my old answers. At last, cursing and swearing, they pushed me out of the room.

"That was the beginning of our examination, but we knew that the worst had yet to come.

"At midnight we were again called. One of our friends told us he had been fearfully beaten with rifles. We saw his limbs, quite black and terribly swollen. About 3 o'clock

my turn came ; I was taken into a small office on the third floor. In the room there was a table on which were some empty whiskey bottles, and standing near it eight police officers. A soldier and a policeman guarded the door, an officer walked about the room with a long (3 ft.) thick rubber nagaika (whip) in his hand. . . . At last the officer with the nagaika took out his watch and said : " If you do not in five minutes give us the answers we require, then this sheet of paper will be beaten to shreds on your back." (This paper was the one on which I gave my first answers to the questions of the police). I replied that I had nothing whatever to add. The five minutes passed and the officers began their work. I was carried into a small recess behind a barrier, then taking a wet towel they bound it round my mouth so that I could not scream, one of the officers holding the ends of the towel. They stripped me, and two officers held my hands and one my legs, and so put me across the barrier. The paper was placed upon my back and beaten to

shreds. After the first part of the flogging they again put the questions to me. I would not reply. The beating was repeated. When they saw I was losing consciousness they stopped for a little while and then went on again.

“ This lasted over an hour and then I was dressed. . . . Then they again commanded me to write my answer on a sheet of paper. An officer took the pen and cried : ‘ Write the truth, you dog, or I will prick out your eyes ! ’ He took the pen and began slowly to prick my eye. Because of the pain I took the pen out of his hand as if willing to write, but I put it on the table. This angered the officer terribly and catching up his nagaika (this one was about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  ft. long, with a leaden ball on the end) struck me across the head several times. I became quite dizzy and fell back on the barrier, and he ceased to beat me. Afterwards another officer came and said to me : ‘ You know that the country is under martial law and therefore we may shoot all you cursed agitators and revolutionists like

dogs without any trial whatever if we like. See, this is what we shall do to you I think you have heard already how the revolutionists who have been arrested are alleged to have attempted to escape near the Central Prison, and how they were all instantly shot. The same thing we will do to you.\* Then they called in five soldiers and said to them : ' You see this man, he must be taken to the prison. But may he not escape on the way ? '

' No, he shall not escape, your Excellency.'

' But will he escape to the next world ? '

' Yes, he will, Excellency.'

" I was told to finish dressing myself and then surrounded by the soldiers went out. But we had not gone far, before we were called back, and I was told that they had decided to let me die by hunger unless I would betray my friends. I was brought back again to the detective department. I must confess that this sort of thing did not intimidate me in the least,

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\* It is a fact that many were said by the authorities to have tried to escape only to put as good a face as possible upon their continual shooting of prisoners without trial.



A WAYSIDE TREE NEAR TALSEN ON WHICH SEVERAL  
REVOLUTIONISTS WERE HANGED.



as I preferred to be shot immediately rather than to undergo such tortures again. Therefore when I was brought back I proposed to my comrades that we should make a desperate effort to escape, even if it would cost us our lives. We all agreed. Then I went to the door behind which our friend Mr. Lapse was imprisoned. I called to him. In a feeble voice he told how terribly he had been tortured. He had been beaten with rifles, then thrown to the ground and one of the officers had got on to his chest and began to jump, trying to break his ribs. . . .

“This was a most terrible night for us. Every one of us was tortured (there were now six of us in this one place.) . . .

“The next morning, January 27th, our friend Lapse feebly called us to his door and returned the food we had previously sent to him, telling us that as the result of his tortures he was unable to eat anything. Soon afterwards he called for water and we then saw that blood was pouring from his mouth. Our agitation and helplessness were awful, we could do nothing. . . .

“ We decided to escape if possible, if not, to perish in the attempt. Our comrades outside had found means to get into communication with us, and we were expecting help from them.

“ On the 29th of January we got up very early in the morning. Twelve members of the Social Democratic Workers' Party armed with Mauser pistols had come to liberate us. Eight of them stayed outside in the street and only four came into the Police buildings. Two of them stopped in the waiting-room where there were one soldier and a policeman. The other two went as if on business direct to the detective department where there were one soldier, ten detectives and two officers. There were also more than 160 soldiers quartered in the upper floors of the buildings. . . .

“ We saw our friends. Their entrance took the guards by surprise. The soldier who had the rifle was shot first. We had been provided by this time with revolvers. The police were so terrified that they immediately ran into a room near by, one of them jumped through

the window breaking his leg. We six went towards the exit. As I entered the waiting-room I saw the policeman fall from a shot. In a few moments we were out in the street where the other friends secured our escape. . . .

"The same evening I left Riga disguised, in the very same train in which the Governor of Livonia travelled. . . .

"Later in the evening four of our friends left behind, amongst whom was our cruelly tortured comrade Lapse, were shot near the Central Prison." . . .

#### THE TORTURE CHAMBERS OF RIGA.

The higher officials and the police did their utmost to keep secret the brutal work of the punishment expeditions, under the leadership of the barons. When the first information of the horrible deeds appeared in the papers of the capital, they were immediately denied by the Governor who said that they were exaggerations spread by the revolutionists. But the evil work was so palpable that it was impossible to keep it any longer from the knowledge of the Russian public. The lead-

ing papers in order to be quite certain about the events in the Baltic Provinces sent special correspondents to investigate the alleged cases of inhumanity. The result of these personal investigations was a public record of the most terrible details of the proceedings of the punishment expeditions. The following is the striking report of the well-known writer Vladimirov, who is known to English readers by his fearless inquiry into the case of Maria Spiridonova. He was sent to Riga on behalf of the "Twentieth Century," and wrote as follows :—

"In the month of January a military tribunal began to sit in Riga. It sentenced to death and executed large numbers of people, of whom many were entirely innocent. A few days ago eight persons were executed by its orders, though the innocence of six had been clearly shown by witnesses. Three among them were eighteen years of age. The methods of the tribunal were such utter violation of all established notions of justice and humanity, and showed such complete indiffer-

ence to every detail of legality, that the lives of the surrounding inhabitants became an agony of apprehension. It consisted of five persons, Major General Arbusov and Colonels Kerman, Baumann, Vitovsky, and Drosdov.

“With hideously ironical effect they chose as the scene of their activities the church, the emblem of Christian love, of brotherly pardon, and the righteousness of God. In front of the altar a table had been placed, and round it were sitting the members of the military tribunal. Between the table and the altar-steps a thin partition had been erected, out of which a door had been cut. All ikons and holy pictures had been removed from the walls, except the image of the Saviour. Upon the partition, opposite the Golden Gates, a portrait of the Tzar was hanging. I could hardly believe my eyes, and I said to the soldier standing near me :—

“ ‘ Do you pray to God here ? ’

“ ‘ Yes,’ he answered. ‘ We take down the petition that is put up for the trials, we bring back the ikons, the priest reads Holy Service, and then we pray.’

“‘And what do you do with the ikons in the meanwhile?’

“‘We take them to the camp. It wouldn’t be fit for the Saints to be here while the trials are going on. So we take them away.’

“It was like some diabolical jest, this scene, in the very Holy of Holies of a believing people.”

Before describing the proceedings of the military tribunal, M. Vladimirov relates some of the means it resorted to in order to gather materials to work upon. “But will anybody in these enlightened times believe me,” he asks, “when I say that there are torture chambers in Riga, torture chambers amply furnished with every means of inflicting horrible sufferings upon defenceless prisoners?

“There are three such chambers in the town (possibly more which I did not succeed in discovering). In these three chambers the prisoners are tortured in order that materials for the tribunal may be extracted from them, which otherwise it would be unable to obtain; in other words, that under the stress of

unbearable physical suffering they may incriminate themselves or their companions. Any acknowledgments wrung from them in this manner are dubbed by their judges 'free and full confessions,' and serve as grounds for the subsequent death sentence.

"I say that in Riga there are three torture chambers. They are: (1) The Secret Police Office, (2) the premises of the 2nd Police Division, (3) the 2nd Mitavsky Police Station. In the first named of these buildings the prisoners are treated in the following manner: Upon first entering they are surrounded by the police and commanded to 'confess' under threat of torture. If no confession be forthcoming the police proceed to business. The chief official leaves the room, and the minor officials, with the aid of Cossacks, commence to beat the prisoner.

"They use nagaikas, rifle butts, and specially made guttapercha rods. They have also a special kind of hempen ropes twisted with wire. With these implements the prisoner is beaten until he loses consciousness,

when his guardians drench him with cold water to bring him to his senses before beginning again. But if all this is of no use, if they can extract no incriminating evidence from the victim against himself or his companions, they resort to a method which the reader will remember was employed in another case (that of Maria Spiridonova) by the Cossack Abramov: they tear the hair from the head of the prisoner, afterwards rubbing salt into the wounded patches. They even have electric appliances to help them in this work. If, after these experiences the prisoner is still able to speak, the chief official is brought back to the room to receive the 'full and free confession.' The weaker among the prisoners will very often after such horrible agony, submit to the will of their torturers and confess to anything they desire.

"Much the same means are used in the premises of the 2nd Police Division. The following fact was told me by a person who had been kept in the cells of that establishment, and who had been acquainted with the

unhappy prisoner who hanged himself after a visit to the torture chamber. Operations commence here at ten at night.

“One of two brothers imprisoned, having refused to confess after a whole night in the torture-chamber, was thrown bleeding and exhausted into the bitterly cold ‘katzet’ (dark cell). When he had been there for over two days he was told that if he persisted in his obstinacy he would be tortured again. This idea he could not bear, and so he determined to die. But it is not easy to die in a prison cell. In the cell he found a hook about two feet from the ground. It would be very difficult to hang oneself with this hook so near the ground. But his determination to die was so powerful that he made a slip knot with strips torn from his shirt and fastened it to the hook, then stretching upon the floor with the noose round his neck he succeeded in strangling himself.”

There is no doubt that he suffered terribly before he died, for his face was frightfully disfigured with convulsions. When the warder

first saw him in this condition he jumped back and called to someone—the same person who afterwards related the incident to me.

It was a most dreadful sight. What super-human strength of will must have been necessary to take one's life in such a position with one's body almost all lying on the ground.

But he died and escaped fresh torture, died having betrayed no one.

Soon the officials appeared on the scene, drew up a report and went away. The police officer who had tortured the prisoner also came.

Even the terrible end of his victim failed to move him, for he exclaimed : " Look ! Look at him, the rascal ! See how he has strangled himself ! "

In an official statement, the Riga prison doctor, M. Viby, says : " Four prisoners, Vindus, Kalley, Tarksh, and Eglit, came to me for inspection. Upon examination I noticed many traces of severe beating ; cuts, bruises, and a terrible wound under the eye of

Eglit. The injuries must have been inflicted by some heavy blunt instrument, such as a nail-studded boot-heel, a 'knuckle-duster,' a bolt, or some such implement. I informed the procurator of the result of my investigation. At the trial I became convinced that the prisoners had been thus treated at the Second Mitavsky Police Station." M. Vladimiroff gives the testimony of several prisoners, and says he could give page after page of the same character.

"Women," he adds, "were subjected to the same tortures. In the house of a barrister at Riga I saw the photograph of the back of a woman marked all over with weals and bruises. Other women were commanded to confess under threat of being given to the Cossacks for their lust. One very young girl told me that she could never remember the uttering of those words without giving way to a paroxysm of terror."

M. Vladimiroff tells how four prisoners were sent out of the town under convoy, and two were shot in order to force the others to confess.

“Four political prisoners were being conveyed to the Riga Central Prison. The soldiers who formed the escort were under the command of a captain of a machine-gun battalion, Captain Pavlovsky. The prisoners were taken outside the town in the night. The moon shone brightly on the scene. When they reached a vacant place, near the Grising Hill, the soldiers stopped.

“The captain commanded the prisoners to confess their guilt.

“They all refused.

“Then he remarked that if they did not confess he would kill all four, and ordered one of them — Mr. Iodnis — to step a little aside and think over his proposition.

“After an interval of a few minutes the captain repeated his question, and Mr. Iodnis answered that he was innocent and had nothing to disclose.

“Orders were then given to shoot him.

“Iodnis was taken a little further off and the soldiers fired several shots, killing him on the spot.

“In the face of such radical treatment Captain Pavlovsky hoped the other three would confess. But Mr. Bushman, the prisoner next interrogated, gave the same answer, and followed a similar fate. He fell from the shots of the soldiers.

“Captain Pavlovsky then placed a lighted match near the lips of Mr. Bushman, and seeing that he did not breathe, left them both on the ground. Again the officer commanded the remaining two prisoners to confess

“And, horror-struck, they both confessed.

“Quite unexpectedly, to the officer, Mr. Bushman showed signs of life and was taken to the prison hospital, where in a month he recovered and afterwards gave evidence about this occurrence to the military tribunal.”

Mr. Vladimiroff concludes his account with the following words :

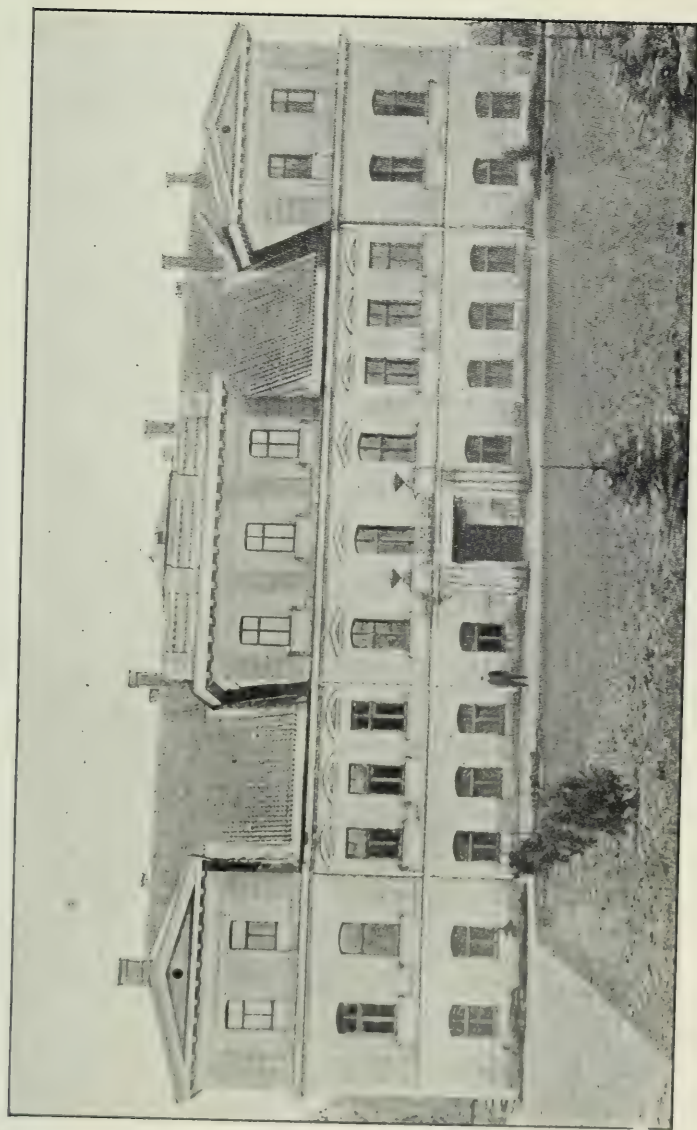
“As I write these lines seven young men are being condemned to death. Confessions were wrung from them by torture, as they each declared in court.”

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE COUNTER-  
REVOLUTION.

It is impossible as yet to review the consequences of this counter-revolution. Yet some idea can be given. To be brief, we may summarise it as follows:—

The impoverishment of a mass of small farmers, whose property has been burned, confiscated by the Crown, or consumed by Cossacks and dragoons. The ruin of industry and agriculture. Several thousand farms could not be cultivated this year for the lack of implements, seeds, and money, and consequently upon all this the peasant's interest in the revolution is now exceedingly great.

A considerable diminution of land values. Mortgages of the Estates Credit Society of the nobles in Courland were offered for sale in December, 1905, to the Lettish Banks at fifty to sixty per cent. reduction. But no one believes that the Estates Credit Society will continue to be in the hands of the nobility, and therefore no one buys. The question of the confiscation of the estate lands is openly discussed by the peasants.



HOME OF ADJUTANT GENERAL OTTO VON RICHTER BEFORE ITS DESTRUCTION.



Robbery and plunder are now every day occurrences. The ill-treated peasants are at last retaliating and revenging themselves on the spies and traitors. When the punishment expedition leaves a district the peasants arrange a tribunal of their own. Class division is accentuated.

Taxes are now withheld over all the country, and no power can extort them from the peasants. The Baltic Provinces were looked upon as the pearl of the Empire, and the State revenue therefrom has been immense. The Baltic nobility value their destroyed estates at £1,100,000. The losses of the peasant-farmers are by no means less. Then it must not be forgotten that there are now in every village many extra widows and orphans, who have to be maintained out of local funds, for nearly all the victims of the punitive expeditions were fathers of families. It is difficult, through not knowing the extent of the devastation, to estimate the cost of this one item to the country. But suppose we say only 2,000 peasants have been killed, and

reckon their yearly earnings at £30 each, that makes a loss of £60,000. In the ordinary way the average life left to them would have been 20 years each, so the loss amounts to £1,200,000. This, together with the joint losses of the nobles and the peasants in real estate, £1,100,000 each, represents a total loss of nearly three and a half million pounds. The population of the Baltic Provinces is about two and a half millions, thus there is a loss of twenty-six shillings suddenly placed on each inhabitant.

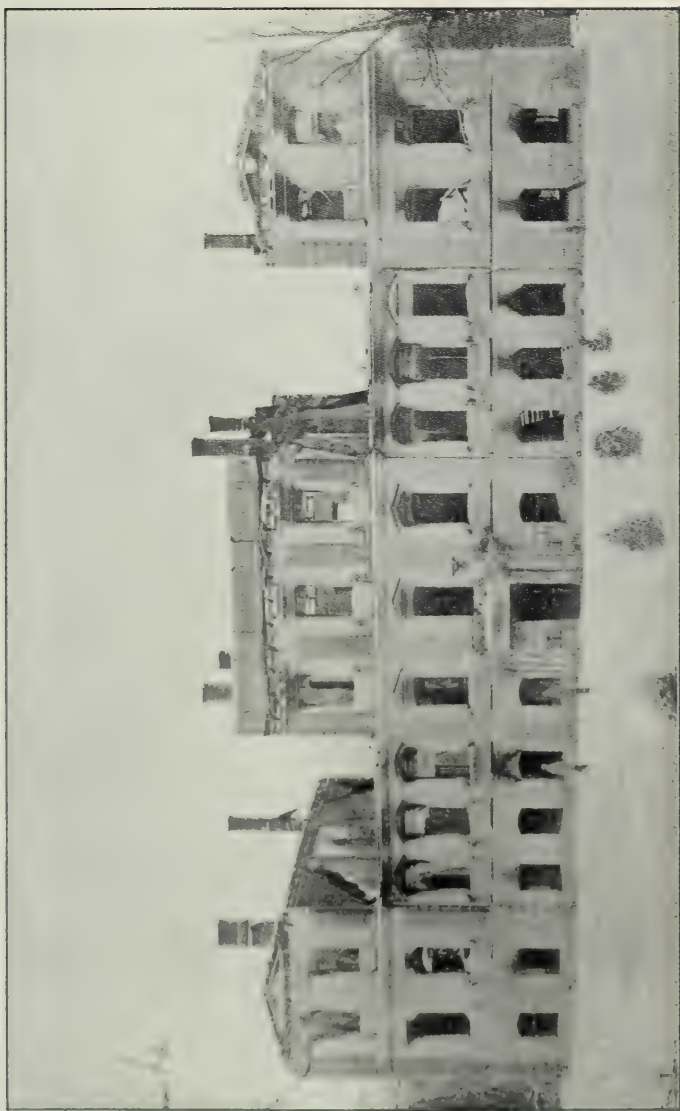
The indirect taxes have risen from six shillings in 1871 to twelve shillings in 1905.\*

The serious influence of these figures upon the State Revenue will be shown in the early future. In 1905 the State debt of Russia was £717,000,000.† That makes £5 8s. on each man, woman and child in Russia. But already by this indebtedness Russia shows in 1906 a deficit of £70,000,000. Still the

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\* "Armes reiches Russland." Georg Bernhard. Berlin, 1905. Page 67.

† Otto Hübner's "Geograph.-statistic." Tabellen.



HOME OF ADJUTANT GENERAL OTTO VON RICHTER AFTER ITS DESTRUCTION.



national debt of last year had again risen by the addition of the loan of 680 million roubles (£68,000,000). The interest for this amount will no doubt cause a still further deficit. Industrial development in Russia has suffered fearfully, indeed some branches are only kept alive by subsidies from the Government. For instance, the naphtha works in the Caucasus received in 1906 a loan of fifteen million roubles free of interest, repayable in ten years. But this industry has suffered yet more by the terrible conflagration of the naphtha district and by the Armenian massacres of 1906.

Russian agriculture is now quite ruined. In nearly half of the provinces of the Empire the year's crops have completely failed, and in 24 provinces dread famine stalks. Despite all this and the white terror of the government the revolutionary movement is now stronger than ever before. On the 10th of August the "St. Petersburg Gazette" published the following :

"Russia consists altogether of eighty-seven

provinces in Europe and Asia—some of them called *gubernii*, some *oblasti*. Of these eighty-seven provinces forty are at present under the rule of martial law, fifteen under enforced protection (i.e. minor stage of siege), and twenty-seven under extraordinary protection (i.e. full state of siege). Thus out of eighty-seven provinces into which Russia is divided, ordinary law is abolished and replaced by 'exceptional laws' in eighty-two provinces, and only in five remote provinces (very sparsely inhabited) is the ordinary Russian law still in force."

And the effect of all this coercion is that the whole Empire is in a state of open rebellion.

According to returns issued by the Police Department in St. Petersburg, the revolutionists throughout Russia during last week, from the 13th of August to the 20th of August only, killed 172 Government officials and seriously wounded 42 others. The police further discovered a hundred and twenty bombs, twelve illegal secret printing plants, and seventeen

depôts of copies of suppressed editions of various newspapers. The revolutionists further pillaged thirteen Government spirit depôts, and in these operations killed or wounded twenty-two employés.

The Guerilla war in the Baltic Provinces is carried on with an energy that no one expected. The ruined and outlawed peasants have formed themselves into bands, or as they call themselves, "The Forest Brothers," and from time to time make surprise attacks upon the Cossacks and other troops distributed all over the Baltic Provinces.

A correspondent of "The Evening Standard and St. James' Gazette" writes the following about the Lettish "Forest Brothers":

"They are the peasants who took part in the armed rising last year, and who escaped first the bullets of General Orloff's Cossacks and dragoons, and then the courts-martial. They know every inch of land in the forests and marshes, and speak only the Lettish tongue.

"They are all well armed and excellent

shots. It is rare that any of their bullets misses its aim.

“Not until I mixed with them did I suspect that they were so numerous.

“The peasants in the neighbouring villages give them food when they cannot get it by looting estates. This they hide in the forest caves with secret entrances.

“They are not afraid of discovery. Some time ago a certain baron found one of their hiding places. A few days later he was found dead.

“When their expeditions became too numerous in the vicinity of Mitau, the authorities drove the peasants of three districts to the forests, and made them surround the wood-dwellers' retreat, but not a single one of them was caught. The peasants, moreover, left part of their provisions in the forest, so that the dreaded raid resulted in a feast.

“A short time ago a number of them made up their minds to walk to Mitau. At a distance of about five miles from the town they stopped at a hostelry in order to refresh them-

selves and to take a rest. The landlord guessed the nature of his guests, and while he made a great show of hospitality, sent secretly for the Cossacks. The wood-dwellers were enjoying themselves when they suddenly heard the clatter of hoofs. They immediately seized their rifles, and in the ensuing skirmish they killed two Cossacks and wounded six, causing the rest to gallop off."

The Central News Agency writes :--

"The troops in the Baltic Provinces are being harassed by detached bands of well-armed sharpshooters, self-styled 'The Forest Brothers,' who are supplied with provisions and information by the peasants. A detachment of Cossacks surrounded one of the bands at a wayside inn near Riga, but the insurgents took cover and escaped, after inflicting on their opponents a loss of two killed and six wounded. They themselves lost one man, who, being wounded, blew his brains out rather than fall into the hands of the Cossacks. A long list of murders and outrages on officials is attributed to these desperadoes,

but their excellent organisation and knowledge of the country enable them to avoid capture."

All this, I think, sufficiently proves that the desire for liberty and the movement of protest in which the entire population of a country is engaged cannot be suppressed by governmental terror and brutality and that the freedom so earnestly sought, so long delayed, and for which so great a price of suffering has been paid by Russia is, in spite of all the horrors, within sight.





# THE SOCIALIST LIBRARY.

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## PROSPECTUS.

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FOR some time it has been felt that there is a deplorable lack in this country of a Socialist literature more exhaustive and systematic than pamphlets or newspaper articles. In every other country where the Socialist movement is vigorous, such a literature exists, and owing to it Socialism has taken a firmer hold upon the intellectual classes, and, amongst Socialists themselves, its theories and aims are better understood than they are here.

Comparing the output of Socialist literature in Germany or France with Great Britain, one must be struck with the ephemeral nature of the great bulk of the matter which we publish, and the almost complete absence of any attempts to deal exhaustively with Socialism in its many bearings in economics, history, sociology and ethics. This failure is all the more to be regretted, because just as the special development of British industrialism afforded the basis for much of the constructive work of foreign Socialists half a century ago, so the growth of British democratic institutions and the characteristics of British political methods have a special and direct bearing upon Socialist theories and tactics.

It is also disquieting to think that, on the one hand, the intellectual life of our country is becoming more and more attached in its interests and sympathies to reaction, and that, on the other, so many who lift up their voices against backward tendencies either look behind with regretful regard upon policies which are exhausted and can no longer guide us, or frankly confess that they are disconsolate without hope.

To the promoters of this LIBRARY, Socialism appears to be not only the ideal which has to be grasped before the benumbing pessimism which lies upon the minds of would-be reformers can be removed, but also the one idea which is guiding such progressive legislation and administration to-day as are likely to be of permanent value. But those experimenting with it are only groping; are working with an instrument they do not understand; are applying an idea they have not grasped; and it is therefore believed that as a practical contribution to political principles and methods, the LIBRARY may be of some value.

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APRIL, 1905.

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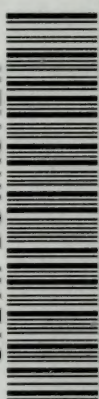
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